11 B B. 4

A

DISSERTATION

ON THE

BOOK of JOB,

Its NATURE, ARGUMENT, AGE, and AUTHOR.

Wherein the celebrated Text, Ch. xix. 25.

I know that my redeemer liveth, &c.

Is occaſionally CONSIDERED, and DISCUSSED.

To which is prefixed

An INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE, with a ſhort ANALYSIS of the whole Book.

Quis neſcit poetis hiſtoriam eſſe pro argumento, quam illi aut adumbratam, aut illuſtratam, certe aliâ facie quum oſtendunt, ex hiſtoriâ conficiunt poema? Quid enim aliud Homerus? Quid ipſis Tragicis faciemus? SCALIGER.

Ainſi lorſqu'on dira, que l'auteur de ce livre peut avoir vécu an commencement de la captivité; on ne dira rien, qui ne ſoit aſſez vraiſemblable, & qui ne ſoit conforme de ſtile de cette ouvrage. Sentimens de quelques Theol. Holl.

The SECOND EDITION.

By JOHN GARNETT, B. D.
Lady *Margaret*'s preacher in the Univerſity of *Cambridge*.

K

LONDON, Printed for M. COOPER, at the *Globe*, in *Pater-noſter-Row*;
MDCCLI.

15

A

DISSERTATION

ON THE

BOOK of JOB.

MUSEUM BRITANNICUM

To the moſt Noble

THOMAS HOLLES,

DUKE of NEWCASTLE,

Marquiſs and Earl of CLARÉ, Viſcount HOUGHTON, Baron PELHAM of LAUGHTON, Knight of the moſt noble Order of the Garter, principal SECRETARY of STATE, and CHANCELLOR of the UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE.

MY LORD,



HOUGH your ready condeſcenſion to take this work of mine, under your grace's patronage, was commenſurate with the very higheſt pitch of my ambition: yet upon reflection, I muſt confeſs to you, ambition ſoon met with a mixture of alloy, very common to it; and I began to think, that at the firſt ſetting out

of

of my book, I was creating expectations in the reader, which I had but ſlender hopes of ever ſatisfying, and conſequently, had been indulging a piece of vanity, which I might find reaſon to repent, in preſuming to prefix ſo great a name to it.

For neither were the conſiderations of prudence and ſelf-defence, leſs connected with this apprehenſion, than thoſe of reſpect to your grace, and ingenuity to the publick; to think of ſheltering a work, that I was conſcious, was either ill-concerted or ill-executed, under your grace's wing, to dare to proſtitute a name, ſo ſacred in both the great and the learned world, and give me leave my Lord, to add, ſo profoundly honored by my myſelf, to ſo diſingenuous a purpoſe, had been the ſure means of drawing upon me, the reſentments of the publick, and in conſequence of thoſe, its moſt unfavorable animadverſions.

Yet gloomy as the proſpect was, at its firſt opening, I had not purſued it far, before I grew to comfort myſelf with this conſideration, that the uniformity of my plan, amidſt the infinite variety of the objects, that compoſed it, was one pretenſion in its favor; and that whatever fate it might ſhare, in the eſteem of the publick, on account of the execution, yet the materials at leaſt, many of them new, moſt of them, introduced under a new form of application, and all of them, made to fall roundly in with my general plan, had a reaſonable claim to its attention. All I aſk of the publick, is a candid peruſal of my book; I think I can depend upon your grace, for giving it a candid reception.

The book, my Lord, that it pretends to throw freſh light upon, I need not tell your grace, is of all the

books, in our canon of ſcripture, confeſſedly the moſt obſcure, and no wonder therefore, if it has been always the leaſt underſtood; ſtill there is light enough to diſcover, what Mr. Addiſon juſtly remarks upon it, that it is tranſcendently above all the heathen compoſitions extant, and that thoſe of mortal authors, are but feeble and languid, when compared with that, which is figured as it were, under the eyes of the Creator. Every attempt to draw ſuch a book, out of its preſent obſcurity, ſhould ſeem entitled to the public indulgence, and if ſo, may it not hope for the countenance of thoſe, whoſe peculiar object is the public intereſt?

How conſiderably, that intereſt has been advanced, both in church and ſtate, under the comfortable doctrine of free enquiry, let the advancement of true learning and religion, in theſe kingdoms, ſince the reformotion, ſpeak; who were the perſons, that brought about this glorious revolution in both, let our own annals teſtify; they were all along, the friends of liberty, and in that character, the friends of mankind; and in proportion, as ſuch a friendſhip ſhall be cultivated, we may fairly promiſe ourſelves, to ſee the great truths of our religion maintained, with equal fortitude and literature, and what is more, with zeal tempered by charity.

This, my Lord, were a ſtate of the world, devoutly to be wiſhed; for ſure I am, whatever the points in debate among Chriſtians are, there is no truth ſo certain, and I conceive, there are few truths ſo important, as this one, that the love of our fellow-creatures, and good will to all mankind, without diſtinction, are the very ſoul and ſpirit of Chriſtianity.

Happily

DEDICATION.

Happily for us, my Lord, this is the very characteriſtic temper of the age we live in, when an equal tenderneſs to the civil and the religious liberties of the ſubject, ſhews its-ſelf ſo remarkably in our governors, and they who have the conducting of the councils of ſtate, have approved themſelves, on all occaſions, the moſt affectionate friends to the church.

I needed not have ſtept beyond the walls of this Univerſity, for a teſtimony of your grace's zeal, for the intereſts of learning and religion; the world, my Lord, has ſeen your grace, greatly taking us under your protection, at a time, when to ſpeak the truth, we were in the utmoſt need of it: at a criſis, when the hand of porvidence, had taken from us a Chancellor, whoſe zeal for our honor and privileges, extended its-ſelf to every individual member of it, and who well knew, that the good government of an Univerſity, was inſeparable from the honor of it.

It was then, my Lord, that our ſenate threw it-ſelf at your grace's feet, and implored your protection. They who had ſeen you a ſtudent in CLARE-HALL, could not forget, that in a rank, and at a time of life, not the moſt patient of reſtraint, you had lived the exacteſt obſerver of that academic diſcipline, which they were every day lamenting the decline of, and ſaw but little hopes, amidſt the exceſſes imported hither from the greater world, of retrieving, without ſome ſuch authority.

They who had been witneſſes to that dignity, with which you had filled an office, leſs connected with the government of the Univerſity, could not but promiſe themſelves

ſelves every thing, from your vouchſafing to contract a ſtill nearer relation to it, in one that was to preſide over it; every thing, my Lord, which either the tendereſt regard for its welfare, ambition for its honor, or concern for the public good, from which I hope we ſhall never affect an independance, could procure or impart to us.

The event has fully juſtified the warmeſt of our expectations; with all the generoſity of your own nature, you entered inſtantly into our complaint, and with all the ſagacity of a great mind, you pointed out to us the only remedy. You recommended at once to us, the ſteadieſt attention to diſcipline; you did more, you communicated your own determined reſolution, to ſupport us with all your authority, to carry it into execution.

But at the ſame time, that you are doing all this honor to our late choice, permit me to tell your grace, you have been doing ſome injury to a future one. The great dignity, that you reflected upon the office you are quitting, puts men at our diſtance from the greater ſphere of life, under a difficulty, you are not aware of, the fixing upon a perſon, equal to ſucceeding you in it.

If we have any amends made for that, it is, that your grace has furniſhed us, in your own example, with a rule to go by, which if we be but careful to obſerve, we cannot well miſtake, and if I know any thing of the preſent ſentiments of this Univerſity, we are not likely to miſtake, the proper ſucceſſor; as I am confident, that here again, our choice will be influenced by no other conſide-

conſiderations, than thoſe of regard to your Univerſity, the Church, and the King.

That your grace, for your country's ſake, may long enjoy that peculiar portion of health and ſpirits, which has thus far enabled you to conduct ſo ſteadily, the great machine of government, and yet gives you leiſure to attend to the leſſer intereſts of this your Univerſity; that you may live to ſee the good effects of that plan of diſcipline, that you are concerting for us, and to that good old age, which your noble predeceſſor's example, would almoſt flatter us into the hopes of, is my Lord, the ſincere wiſh and prayer of

Your Grace's moſt devoted

and obedient humble Servant

Sid. Coll.
Apr. 12, 1749.

J. GARNETT.

PREFACE.

WHEN I firſt ſate down to throw my thoughts together, upon the book of Job, *I little thought to ſee them ſtretch beyond the compaſs of a pamphlet, much leſs did I hope, they were ever likely to reach the ſize they have done. The materials I had collected, were ſo very ſcanty, that upon a review, I thought the moſt that could be made of them, would be a ſermon, and in that ſhape, I determined to let them try their fate before the Univerſity, and even of that, they made but a ſlender proportion.*

The ſermon and the materials too, from which it had been compoſed, I ſent four years ago to the preſs, thinking they might ſerve at leaſt as hints for thoſe, who were buſied in this province at that time, to make their own uſe of. But it was not ſo eaſy to get rid of the impreſſions, theſe materials had left with me, as of the materials themſelves; the allegory was ſo glaring in all parts of the book, that I had examined, that I could not help ſuſpecting, that it muſt be at the bottom of thoſe, that I had not; and though there were very formidable difficulties in the way, yet in proportion as I advanced in the enquiry, I obſerved them gradually diminiſhing, and began to conceive ſome faint hopes, that by the help of that virtue, which was the ſubject of the book, much after all, might be done towards coming, at a competent underſtanding of it.

I laid therefore aſide all thoughts of then publiſhing the ſermon, and determined to take once more the materials into my own hands, and try, whether they might not be made to ſerve for a plan, that was likely to be a much more enlarged one; and ſcanty as they were, upon experiment I found they anſwered. Indeed I had occaſion more than once, to alter my opinion, not of the main principle, for that never once failed me, but of ſome of the leſs material articles; nor am I aſhamed to own, that with regard to the FEASTS, *which were the ſubject of that diſcourſe, I found reaſons afterwards to quit both the one and the other of the accounts I then gave of them.*

At that time, I had looked, as the reader may ſee, but little farther than the two firſt chapters of the book; there was ſomething ſo very diſcouraging upon the very face of the reſt, where the dialogue commences, that I confeſs, I long doubted of ever ſeeing it brought, to any tolerbale

connection with the other; and to elicit the grand doctrine of PATIENCE, *from a repreſentation like that, full of impatience and querulouſneſs, was a conſideration of all others the moſt embarraſſing; ſo from doubting in the former inſtance, I was well nigh deſpairing of any ſucceſs at all in this.*

Still, in poſſeſſion as I thought I was, of the true ſecret, there was no retreating from the purſuit, and I reſolved therefore to ſpare no pains to get at the bottom of it; the track I had hit upon, was too promiſing to be quitted, and I thought, if there were no ſolving the appearance upon hiſtoric principles, yet upon allegoric and dramatic ones, there might be ſome chance at leaſt of it. There were authorities enough of the firſt name in the learned world, to bear me out in the ſuppoſition, both of the allegory and the drama, and if there had not, there were all the traces of dramatic art in the machinery of the poem, for a poem at leaſt it is agreed to be, to juſtify my ſetting out upon that foundation.

Diſmiſſing therefore all the prejudices and hypotheſes, which had manifeſtly defeated the ſchemes of thoſe, who had gone before me in the enquiry, the method I reſolved upon was, what I conceive to be the moſt ſimple and natural one; in the firſt place, to deduce if I could, the ſubject-matter of the book, from the plain and obvious contents of the book itſelf; the next ſtep was, to collect together all, what we may call the characteriſtic attributes of the ſubject, and then to compare them with the true and proper attributes of the ſubject, which I ſuppoſed to be ſhadowed under it: and theſe were to be collected from hiſtory; the third was, to compare as exactly as I was able, the language, in which I conceived ſeveral events recorded in ſcripture ſtory, with the language, in which they were recorded: and this again was to be gathered either from the jewiſh chronicles, or from their prophets; the laſt was, to conſider with all the attention I was maſter of, the circumſtances, diſpoſition and argument of the book; and then ſee, if from all theſe put together, they would not be found to correſpond with the grand event of all, which I apprehended to be the proper baſis of this allegory.

And this to me, ſeemed paying the greateſt reverence, at the ſame time that it was plainly, doing the greateſt juſtice to the book under examination; if it turned out upon enquiry, to be an allegory founded in ſcripture hiſtory, a very rational account was to be given, why it has been through ſo many ages, looked upon as a piece of ſcripture hiſtory; if the circumſtances

of

of time and place, as well as of perſons and things, proved to fall in with thoſe of the canonical books of ſcripture, an account full as rational, was to be given, why it came into the canon.

How far I have ſucceeded in making good all, or any of theſe points, is now ſubmitted to the conſideration of the publick, with all that deference to its judgment, which every enquiry after truth ſhould bear, and if I know myſelf, with all that diffidence of my own, which an undertaking of ſo arduous a nature, could not fail to inject. It has been my misfortune, not my choice, in the progreſs of ſo complicated an enquiry, to encounter prejudices, deeply rooted in mankind, and to have to do with their learned advocates; a conflict, which I had gladly ſpared myſelf the irkſomneſs of, could the declining it have been managed conſiſtently with any reſpect to authors, ſo well known, and ſo juſtly eſteemed in the learned world; there was no pretending ignorance in the caſe, without expoſing my own ingenuity to hazard, nor was there any paſſing by their arguments, without the imputation of a neglect, that it had but ill becomed me to have affected.

If in points, where I found cauſe to differ incidentally, from any of them, I have ever been carried beyond that temper, which ſhould be the rule of all, but is in fact, the rule obſerved by few writers, in matters of controverſy, I would wiſh that error placed to the account of zeal for, what I thought I was contending for, truth; if that zeal, like moſt other, has ſuffered a ſingle expreſſion to have eſcaped me, that ſhall be thought harſh, I heartily wiſh it unſaid.

The calamity is, that in general, I have had moſt to do with thoſe, who have had the leaſt to do with the book its-ſelf; authors, who deal only in detached parcels of it, and erect their reſpective theories and criticiſms, upon ſingle texts, independent of all conſiderations of either the nature, the ſcope or the argument of the whole book, and which therefore they have deſcanted upon, at their own rate, juſt as either their attainments in the learned languages, or their talents at paraphraſing or refining, gave them opportunities.

Of ſuch as theſe I now take leave, without meaning either to depreciate their critical performances, or to derogate from their practical expoſitions, many of which, there is no denying to be extremely ingenious, and moſt of which, I confeſs to be both uſeful and pious. The quarter I have moſt to fear from, or indeed ſhall be very anxious about, is that, which brings

in queſtion, either the allegory or the argument, for if theſe ſhould once be queſtioned, the foundations are ſtruck at, and not the out-ſkirts only of the work, upon which the other criticks ſpend all their fire.

If I have any more than ordinary partiality, to any thing in this diſſertation; it is firſt, to the pretenſions I think it has, to having placed the book its-ſelf, in a light more worthy of the ſacred canon, where it is inſerted; and next, to thoſe it has, to all that fullneſs and integrity, which others to me at leaſt, ſeem to want; that it has reduced the three parts of this book, which all who read it with any critical exactneſs, agree to be diſtinct, to a rational conſiſtency; and that at the ſame time, that the allegory is traced uniformly, through them all, the argument is made to comport, as it ought, all along with the allegory.

Not that I pretend, any more than my betters, to be without my noſtrums upon this ſubject, and in a field ſo fair for ſpeculation, it had been as ſtrange, as unprecedented, if I had. Exceptions therefore, I cannot doubt, conſidering the prejudices it has to deal with, it will be liable to; but ſuch exceptions, as affect not one or other of theſe foundations, I ſhall look upon rather as the infirmities, than the faults of it, common to every mortal performance, and therefore with the candid reader, at leaſt venial; or ſuch at worſt, as the harmony of the whole, ſhould that prove the caſe with it, would ſeem to attone for; concluding that obſervation of Lord Bacon's, *to hold as true in this, as in the caſe he applies it to.* "The harmony of a ſcience, ſupporting each part the other, is and ought to be, the true and brief confutation and ſuppreſſion, of all the ſmaller ſort of objections."

THE

THE

Introductory Diſcourſe.

WHEN I firſt publiſhed this diſſertation, it was more than intimated, that the Book of Job was a drama, compoſed upon forenſic principles, or a work of imagination, drawn up ſomewhat in the form, and manner, of a trial at bar; that Job was impleaded by the three advocates, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, who, as well as Job himſelf, appeared in no other character, than proxies for other perſons, and that the whole compoſition was plainly of this kind, conducted throughout in a popular harangue, they collecting together every thing, which imagination could ſuggeſt, or eloquence refine upon, to impeach him of the higheſt crimes, he purſuing the ſame plan, to acquit himſelf of the charge againſt him.

It was hinted at the ſame time, that I was then preparing an analyſis of the whole book, to make good this hypotheſis, and ſince the publication of the diſſertation, this has employed much of my attention. I have ſeen, and read, ſome pieces, that have made their appearance ſince, upon a very different plan, and confeſs, have found no reaſon yet to alter my opinion, either of the nature and ſtructure of the performance, or of its ſcope and argument. The very lateſt writers give up, what indeed there is no maintaining, that perfect character of patience in Job, which it had been the buſineſs of ages to contend for, or was rather the whole run of antiquity, to take for granted.

This, I apprehend, is the leading clue to any fair ſolution of this performance; for if Job be not at laſt the perfect model of patience, upon the face of it, which he has paſſed for, if the very reverſe of this be, as we ſay, his dramatic character, querulous, impatient, nay and blaſphemous, recourſe muſt be had to ſome other, than hiſtoric principles, to account for his juſtification, and acquittal, at the concluſion of his trial. Thoſe principles are ſuggeſted in the body of the diſſertation, and what I have now to add is, not ſo much in vindication of either the allegory, or the argument, as to eſtabliſh the notion, inculcated, of a perſonated character,

throughout the whole book, and to ſhew, by a ſhort analyſis of it, that the whole debate is conducted all along, in form of a judicial proceſs, inſtituted againſt Job, and ſupported by the three friends, only as ſo many advocates, and not in proper character.

To form a right judgement of a work, thus conducted, it was plain, at firſt ſight, that little light was to be got from the comments, or the expoſitions, of either meer critics or divines. If there were any commentators to be found, that to theſe accompliſhments, had added a competent ſhare of the antient juriſ-prudence, from that quarter, it might be hoped, ſome information was to be come at. Schultens had advanced the fartheſt, and criticiſed the text, moſt conformably to the forenſic notion, of any author, that had yet fallen in my way, but unfortunately, had confounded the forenſic with agoniſtic terms, ſometimes conſidering Job entering the liſts with the three friends, and thoſe again with him, as ſo many combatants, at others, more properly, as advocates.

At laſt, in that crowd of commentators, which has oppreſſed this, more than any other book of ſcripture, Monſieur Mercier, a french critic, preſented himſelf, whom, for the forenſic materials of the book before us, I would recommend to the peruſal of thoſe, more immediately concerned in the examination of it; an author, ſingularly well qualified for the taſk, he ſate down to, becauſe ſingularly accompliſhed in thoſe two branches of literature, which lead to a right acquaintance with it, the hebrew language, and the civil law, of which, we ſee ſo happy an application made, in the very laſt edition of this book *.

Upon the authority of theſe two authors, what I firſt hazarded with the publick, as a conjecture of my own, I ſhall venture now to eſtabliſh, as the true, and proper, notion of the performance under conſideration. Indeed I owe ſo much to ſome perſons, of equal candor and learning, with whom I live in confidence, and who have freely communicated to me their doubts upon this ſingle point, and have a right therefore to be ſatisfied. I was not ſo ſanguine, as to conceive any expectation, that the publick would fall in at once with ſo novel a theory, as my book preſented, and ſo prepared myſelf to make good, from the authority of great names, that grand arbiter of the publick's judgement, what from a private hand might well be doubted.

In B. II. §. 4. ſome advances are made, upon the authority of the antient Targums, of Codurc, Druſius, Selden, Hammond, and Schultens, to prove, that the characters of the ſeveral diſputants are aſſumed, and not proper ones, of advocates and proxies, and not of the parties intereſted; that they plead, argue, and diſpute, like ſo many declamers, and orators, and maintain a cauſe, on each ſide, which belonged, in perſon, to neither of them; that the *accepting of perſons*; *ſpeaking for God*; *pleading for God*;

* Liber Job. ex editione Ric. Grey. S. T. P. 1742.

contending

contending for God; *being in God's stead*; *being mockers*; are so many forensic terms, and imply their being only so many advocates [a].

And thus my critic considers them. To that text, *my friends are my mockers*, he gives the very turn, we contend for, "my pleaders, my declamers, florish at me all their rhetorick, deal in studied, and pointed sentences, and affect all the flowers of eloquence, to provoke, and inflame me [b]." To that other passage, *as one mocketh a man, do ye so mock God? he will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons*, he gives the same. "Is it right in you to play the part of God? no, he can best defend his own cause, there is no necessity, that you should be his advocates, or pleaders, he has need of no such grimace and artifice [c]."

If any one can be supposed to understand the true state of the case with them, one would think, Elihu, the moderator in the dispute, the person in God's stead, should do it. Yet, as it has been already suggested, he charges Job with *his answers* for *wicked men* [d], with assuming the character of wicked men, and speaking under it. He charges him, in so many words, with grimace through his whole part, *yea thou castest out fear, and restrainest prayer before God, for thy mouth uttereth iniquity, and thou choosest the tongue of the crafty* [e]. So too he objects the same grimace to the part, the three friends were acting, *Behold I gave ear to your reasons, I waited for your words, whilst you searched out what to say* [f].

Schultens translates the last words, "whilst you employed all your subtilty, all your invention, mustered up all your genius, to express your sentiments in the exactest manner [g]." But Mercier descends stills deeper into the sense of the passage, and expounds them, "whilst you collected together your whole apparatus," for so some copies render the words, i. e. "whilst, like professed orators, you brought your arguments together from all quarters, with all the parade and pomp, all the elaborate ostentation of science, rather to shew your own parts and learning, than to make good your point [h]."

The whole of his reproof turns, we see, not upon the hypocrisy of the respective parties in the dispute, considered in the moral view, but upon the address they practised, in the management of it, that the parts, they were playing, were feigned and not real ones, that they no more spoke the language of their hearts, than Job did, but were espousing the cause

[a] Dissert. p. 241. [b] Mes Rhetoriqueurs, qui tournez toute votre rhetorique contre moi, et vous etudiez a bien dire, et chercher des coleurs de rhetorique pour me piquer. Mercer. Comm. in Lib. Job. [c] Estne par vobis Dei causam agere? Minime vero. Ipse se satis defendet. Nihil necesse est, ut ei patroni sitis et advocati. Putatisne fore, ut ei os oblinatis, et verba detis, ut homo solet homini. Nec ille his nugis eget aut strophis. Mercer.
[d] Dissert. p. 240. [e] Ch. xv. 2. [f] xxii. 11. [g] Aurem præbui ad intelligentias vestras, usque dum sermones subtilius scrutaremini. i. e. dum omnem vim ingenii et intelligentiæ vestræ explicâsletis, omnia quam exactissime ventilassetis. Schult.
[h] Totus eram in auscultando argumentis, quibus peritiam et doctrinam nitebamini ostendere. Apparatui vestro, i. e. argumentis cum summo apparatu, hinc inde undequaque conquisitis. Selectis enim verbis et exquisitis usi sunt rationibus. Mercer.

of virtue, juſt as Job was renouncing it, for ſome particular purpoſe. To let them ſee, that this was the caſe with them, he puts his own character, the part he was going to act, in compariſon with theirs, and aſſerts the ſimplicity, and ingenuity of it, in direct contradiſtinction to them.

It is amazing to obſerve, how, guarded as this character of Elihu's is, by every diſtinction, that could claim reverence to it; by his aſſerting inſpiration; by his profeſſing, at the very firſt ſetting out, that he was in God's ſtead; and by that ſuperior air of majeſty; that candor and dignity; which runs through the whole of it, it ſhould ever have been miſtaken ſo egregiouſly, as we find it. From Theodore of Mopſueſte, down to Codurc and Calmet, he has been repreſented as the moſt vain, futil, bombaſt ſpeaker in the whole debate, and later writers of our own have not ſcrupled to charge him with weakneſs, and paſſion, alledging, in great tenderneſs, ſo ſimple an excuſe for him, as his youth; an excuſe, that does as little honor to their ſagacity, as to his conduct. Let but Job be the perfect, and upright man, after their own heart, no matter, what becomes of one of God's prophets.

Simplicity, and ingenuity, were what he laid claim to, in oppoſition to the grimace, and addreſs, of the other ſpeakers. He diſclaims expreſly, and his part required it, any ſuch perſonating the characters of men, as they had been practiſing. The part, he was going upon, was the part of God himſelf; he was to ſpeak the language, aſſert the authority, and ſupport the dignity, of God's prophet; to reprove, admoniſh, applaud, or cenſure, the ſeveral pleaders in the cauſe, juſt as he found occaſion, and to ſit a kind of deputy in it to the ſupreme judge.

Thus therefore he opens his commiſſion. Firſt, he puts in his claim to inſpiration, to command their reverence, and attention. Next, he diſtinguiſhes between his part, and theirs, and aſſerts his ſuperiority over them in that reſpect. They had been acting the part of man, or pleading, as it is elſewhere expreſſed, *as a man pleadeth with his neighbour*. He deſires to be heard in a different capacity. *Let me not I pray you*, accept any man's perſon, *neither let me* give flattering titles to man, *for I know not how to* give flattering titles, *my maker would ſoon take me away* [1].

The, *accepting mens perſons*, is a phraſe, for the explaning of which, I muſt refer the reader to p. 240, where it is ſhewn to mean no more, than perſonating the characters of men. Indeed this is the literal ſenſe of the words, and whenever they are uſed, as they ſometimes are in ſcripture, for *being partial*, or *having reſpect to perſons*, it is certainly in the figurative, and not in the literal ſenſe; and the figure itſelf is borrowed from the literal notion, of *taking a man's perſon upon one's-ſelf*. Thus, *induere, ſuſtinere perſonas*, among the Latins. This is the primary ſenſe of the words. The ſecondary is, to ſupport ſuch a character, as belongs to thoſe perſons, to grow partial to it, and make it our own. The forenſic ſenſe of the words is, to take up, and lay down, occaſionally, ſuch and ſuch qualities, in ſuch and ſuch a cauſe, as belong properly to it †.

That

[1] Ch. xxxii. 21.

† Suſcipere perſonam, et deponere, i. e. accipere qualitatem in

That it is the primary ſenſe, that the paſſage, under conſideration, is to be taken in, appears from what follows. *Neither let me give flattering titles to men.* The words are ill tranſlated, and the reſtoring them to their proper meaning, will both aſcertain Elihu's and the other characters. KANAH, *give flattering titles*, is rendered by Schultens, *circumloqui*, to uſe circumlocution in ſpeaking; and this comes ſtill nearer the general charge of addreſs and artifice, of pomp and parade, in the manner of conducting the debate, like ſo many orators or declamers, on the ſide of the two contending parties.

But, if my critic be right, the more preciſe notion of the word is, *mutato nomine loqui*, to ſpeak under ſome other name, or perſon, inſtead of calling every one by his own proper name, making uſe of occult terms, inſtead of addreſſing the diſcourſe directly, and ingenuouſly, at the perſon it is deſigned for, and no other; employing art, and circumlocution, in ſpeaking to him [k]. And this coincides exactly with Job's own charge againſt the three friends. *They have dealt deceitfully*, have prevaricated, feigned, diſſembled, been acting a part, *with me.*

If this be the genuin ſenſe of the words, it will be ſeen, in caſe it reflect any farther light upon this character of Elihu, and is found to fall in with thoſe pretenſions to ſincerity and ingenuity, in his manner of ſpeaking, which he aſſerts in contradiction to theirs; for thus he proceeds. *Behold now have I opened my mouth, my tongue hath ſpoken in my palate, my words ſhall be of the uprightneſs of my heart, my lips ſhall utter knowledge* clearly [l]. Here the language of the heart, is directly oppoſed to the language of the lips; the honeſty of the one aſſerted, in diſtinction to the inſincerity of the other. BARUR, *clearly*, Schultens renders, *purum, expurgatum*, and explanes it into ſimplicity, and perſpicuity. My critic improves upon it, and adds, *a ſuco alienum, ab omni ſcorio mendacii, aut doli, purgatum & mendatum*, void of all coloring and diſguiſe, clear of all the refuſe of diſſimulation and artifice.

There cannot be a ſtronger text in point, than where Elihu, ſtill inſiſting upon the ſimplicity of his part, adds. *Truly my words ſhall not be falſe*, like yours; *he that is perfect in knowledge is with thee.* SHAKAR, *falſe*, ſignifies a *lie*, in the ſtrict ſenſe of the word, and ſo we find it uſed by Job, where he calls the three friends *forgers of lies*; but Schultens has criticiſed both the texts, and inſtead of SHAKAR, a lie, reads SAKAR, *fucus*,

in causâ, et relinquere poſteà. Et perſonæ controverſiæ interdum controverſæ ſunt inter litigatores, et pronuntiatur perſonas conſtitutum iri ex iis, quæ ab apparitore acta ſunt, et renuntiata. Quod ſermone forenſi dicunt. Budeus. Forens. p. 65.

Ego defenſorem, in meâ perſonâ, maximè laudari volo, i. e. volo videri egregie fungi defenſoris partibus, in meâ perſonâ, i. e. in meo munere et officio, quod ſuſcepi. Cic.

[k] Id ſignificat verbum KANAH, occulte aliquem deſignare, cognominare, titulis et tectis verbis, loco nominis proprii, uti; per ambages aliquid dicere, quod ſimpliciter dici non poterat, vitandi odii, vel benevolentiæ captandæ, gratiâ.———Proponit rationem, quâ ſit acturus inter loquendum, ſe aperte, diſerte rem, uti eſt, tractaturum, non tectis verbis, ut alii, quos hic arguit. Mercer.

[l] Ch. xxxiii. 3.

a falſe coloring [m], what Tully calls *pigmenta oratoria*; and the very minute difference, in dropping a ſingle point, juſtifies his reading. The ſenſe of the paſſage will then be, "my words ſhall not be as yours have been, painted over with the plauſible varniſh, the falſe colorings of rhetoric; God, who is perfect in underſtanding, and knoweth man's heart, ſees through it."

There are but two paſſages more, amidſt a number of minuter ones, that I ſhall lay any farther ſtreſs upon, to make good this matter. One, where Job complains, *theſe ten times have ye reproached me; ye are not aſhamed, that ye make yourſelves* ſtrange to me [n]. The critics are divided about the exact meaning of the word, HAKAR, *make ſtrange:* ſome of them render it, are obſtinate, perverſe, againſt me. Others, more properly, foreign, aliens, ſtrangers to me, *i. e.* are acting a part ſtrange, and foreign, as you make it, to your real character. The other; *how then comfort ye me, ſeeing in your anſwer remaineth falſehood* [o], or, as almoſt all the critics render it, prevarication, diſſimulation.

From all which places, it appears, I think, indiſputably, that the prevarication and hypocriſy, the fraud and mockery, the lies and forgeries, which the contending parties charge alternately upon each other, are not in general to be underſtood, ſo much of the moral characters of the parties, though this may ſometimes be the caſe with them, as of the art and management of the diſpute, that it is the perſonated character, that is intended to be expoſed by ſuch expreſſions, and not the moral ones, and that Job, and the three friends, appear throughout the whole debate, in no other capacity, than that of ſo many pleaders, or advocates, in perſonated character, all along, and not in proper one.

And ſo much for the perſonated characters. We come now to ſee the uſe, that is made of them; to ſhew, that under this notion of pleaders, or advocates, they enter upon their province; that the three friends take one ſide of the argument, and Job the other; that Job is impleaded at the bar, and the three friends are his accuſers; and that the whole performance, which we call the book of Job, is conducted throughout, in form of a judicial proceſs, or criminal cauſe, and not of any ſet argument, or debate upon a diſputable problem.

Ch. iii. Which is, properly ſpeaking, the firſt opening of the cauſe, or of, what we have elſewhere called, the dramatic part, ſets out with Job blaſpheming, as Satan had engaged he would, and curſing the day of his birth. This gives handle to the three friends, to open the charge againſt him, and to implead him in form.

Ch. iv. Eliphaz, the Temanite, opens the indictment againſt Job, firſt with an indirect inſinuation of his being an hypocrite, and diſſembler with God; next, with a direct charge upon him of impatience and impiety.

[m] Non fucus ſermones mei. Fucato oratori opponitur integer ſcientiis, i. e. ſincerus. SAKAR. color ruber. mox fucatus. Ad pigmenta oratoria etiam traduci ſe patitur. Non calidus te circumveniam, ſed veritati indagandæ unice inſiſtam. Schult.

[n] Ch. xix. 3. [o] Ib. xxi. 34.

Eliphaz here, as Schultens obſerves, " takes upon him to plead the part of God, and not his own, though it looks like it, and inveighs againſt him with great vehemence *."

Ch. v. The court opens in form, and Job is called upon to plead to the indictment. *Call now, if there be any that will anſwer thee*, i. e. defend thee, *and to which of the ſaints wilt thou turn?* The two words, KARAH, *call*, and HANAH, *anſwer*, are uſed in their proper forenſic ſenſe, as they are through the whole book, for calling into court, and ſpeaking to the character of the perſon accuſed, and are a challenge, as it were to Job, to produce either men, or angels, to ſpeak in his defence. And thus both Schultens, and Mercier, criticiſe them †.

Ch. vi. vii. Job remonſtrates to the charge, by repreſenting to them the inhumanity of their proceedings againſt him, and by laying before the court, the extreme diſtreſs, and undeſerved calamity, of his ſituation. Galled with Eliphaz's charge upon him, he flies out into bitter complaints of the three friends, and indecent expoſtulations with God, as capriciouſly afflicting him, then repeats, in the moſt ſanguine and irreverent manner, his wiſhes to die, and to be delivered from his afflictions.

Ch. viii. Bildad, the Shuhite, takes up the ſame charge againſt Job, and concludes, in general terms, his guilt from his ſufferings, reproving him for his indecent expoſtulations with God, and endeavouring to convince him of the juſtice and equity of providence, which, whatever men may ſometimes think of it, cannot pervert judgement. This ſoftens Job, and he begins to relent.

Ch. ix. He ſees, and confeſſes, the impropriety of contending with his maker, acknowledges the infinite diſtance between them, and ſeems reſolved to ſubmit to whatever he ſhall pleaſe to inflict. Yet,

Ch. x. He flies out again into the ſame freedom of expoſtulation, and able no longer to ſmother his indignation, declares, he will give it full vent, and ſpeak in all the bitterneſs of his ſoul; that he will call upon God himſelf, and demand of him his reaſons, for bringing him thus to ſhame. And he does it with that petulancy, and freedom, which he engaged for.

Ch. xi. Zophar, the Naamathite, takes him to taſk, for his dealing thus freely with God, and charges him with ſawcineſs, raſhneſs, and impiety, for his calling upon God in ſuch a manner; wiſhes that God would, as he deſired, litigate the point with him, reaſon with him upon the ſubject of his ſufferings, and then he would ſoon ſee, that leſs was inflicted upon him, than he had deſerved. In the mean time, that abſolute ſubmiſſion, and reſignation, were the beſt leſſon for him.

* Dei cauſam acturus, ut opinabatur, nec ſuam ſane, ut ferme fit, in arenam deſcendit Eliphaz. Arg. in ch. iv.

† KARAH. clamavit. HANAH. reſpondit. induunt vim judicialem. q. d. voca. age. periculum fac, ſi lubet, novæ cum Deo contentionis, advoca cauſæ tuæ defenſores, ſeu erit homo, ſeu angelus. Schult.

Ch.

Ch. xii. xiii. Diſſatisfied with the proceedings againſt him, before Elihu, Job comes to the very point, which he had been aiming at all along, to take the cauſe out of their hands, and carry it up to a higher tribunal. He tells the three friends, he had heard their whole accuſation, and thus far had ſubmitted to it, but that now he ſhould lodge his appeal with God himſelf, and diſpute the matter of his innocence with him; that he would plead his own cauſe before him, and aver the injuſtice of his ſufferings; that what they had been arguing all along, as advocates for God, he would ſoon ſhew them, they were miſtaken in.

He was now prepared in form for the trial. *Behold now I have ordered my cauſe, I know that I ſhall be juſtified. Who is he that will litigate the matter with me? For now if I hold my tongue, I ſhall give up the ghoſt.* Then in plain terms, he gives God his option to plead, either as proſecutor or defendant *; and ready to anſwer all objections, he demands, why he is ſo wretchedly afflicted? dealing, as Mercier obſerves, too familiarly and audaciouſly with God, as if he could not, if he thought proper, alledge many juſt reaſons for it.

There were but two favors, previous to his tryal before God himſelf, that he would aſk, and then he would come intrepid to it; one, that *God would withdraw his hand from him*; the other, that *his dread ſhould not make him afraid.* Remove but theſe two obſtacles, and leave him at full liberty to offer what he had to ſay, in his own defence, he would ſpeak, as he does, loudly and openly, and neither diſſemble the opinion, he entertained of God's proceedings with him, nor deſpair of vindicating his innocence, in the moſt ſolemn and public manner †.

Ch. xiv. He complains heavily of the impeachment, brought againſt him by the three friends, that ſo frail a creature, as man, ſhould be thus brought up to the bar of judgement by them; that God had *written bitter things againſt him, i. e.* had libelled him for high crimes; *that his tranſgreſſions were ſealed in a bag, i. e.* the inſtrument of his impeachment brought into court, in the advocate's bag, to be produced as evidence againſt him ‖. Still, though he could not ſubmit to their impeachment, before Elihu, yet he was ready to take his tryal, before God, and if God would call upon him, in a judicial way, he was ready to anſwer him.

* Optionem ei dat, ut aut actoris aut rei, perſonam delegat, paratus ad quodvis objectum reſpondendum. Vult ſibi cauſam aperiri, cur ita affligatur priuſquam condemnetur, familiarius atque audacius cum Deo agens, quaſi non potuiſſet, ſi ex lege agere voluiſſet, afferre permulta, ob quæ eſſet affligendus. Mercer.

† Oſtendit ſe non poſtulare amplius, quam ut majeſtatem ſuam ſeponat Deus, in congreſſum deſcendens cum mortali homine, et ſe vel ad tribunal ſuum aſcendere paratum. Schult.

Nempe id quod c. ix. poſtulatum fuerat, nunc animoſius liberiuſque urgetur, atque a noſtro in congreſſum cum numine, γυμνη τη κεφαλη, deſcenditur, idque non ſine gravi exceſſu. Arg.

Jam cum Deo diſceptaturus duo a ſe amoveri vult, plagam et majeſtatem, quæ eum ita perterrefecerant, ut ſuas non audeat rationes eloqui. Hoc ſi facias, non timebo loqui, intrepide coram te comparebo, et cauſam meam agam. Mercer.

‖ Diſſert. p. 190. Bolduque Comment. in loc.

Ch.

Ch. xv. Eliphaz remonſtrates to him the indecency, and irreverence of ſuch an appeal, as he had been making to God, and of his calling him ſo impudently into court; tells him, he was now arrived at the higheſt pitch of inſolence, had given up all reverence for his maker, and *reſtrained prayer before God*, that he had not treated him with the ordinary reſpect due to a judge, and that his own mouth, and not he, had convicted him of the greateſt impiety.

Ch. xvi. Job gives full vent to his deſpondency, and, in downright terms, charges God with cruelty, and injuſtice, with heaping upon him calamity upon calamity, unprovoked and undeſerved, with making him the tool of his reſentments, and ſporting with his miſery. Then he returns to the old challenge, and demands a perſonal conference, and tryal before him.

Ch. xvii. He proceeds to a downright demand upon God, to join iſſue with him upon the indictment. *Lay down now, put in a pledge, who is he that will ſtrike hands with me?* This was the form, of old, of joining iſſue in cauſes; the two parties ſtruck their hands together, by way of entering into a recognizance, or giving ſecurity [q]. Now therefore he ſtakes the whole credit, of his cauſe, upon the defenſe, he undertakes to make, before God, and puts his conviction, or acquittal, upon that ſingle footing.

Ch. xviii. Bildad, greatly provoked at the boldneſs, and confidence, of this meaſure, replies to him; accuſes him of diſingenuity and inſolence, and infers his guilt from his confidence.

Ch. xix. Job perſiſts in the old complaint, of his being moſt inhumanly treated by God, without the leaſt demerit, or fault, on his ſide. Then demands again, that a libel, in form, be preferred againſt him, and a public notary employed to take down his defenſe [r]. Then he expreſſes his confidence in the ſtrongeſt terms, that God would make his perſonal appearance in open court, that at laſt he ſhould ſee him, as his redeemer, and deliverer from all his perſecutions.

Ch. xx. Zophar returns to the old charge upon him, and only obſerves in general, that it is impoſſible, that any one ſhould be ſo ſeverely afflicted, as he, who had not given ſome occaſion, or other, for it by his ſins.

Ch. xxi. To this Job objects, how untrue the obſervation is, in fact, and how inconcluſive all ſuch reaſoning; for that the good, and bad, ſhare alike the happineſs, and miſery, of this world, and neither from their deaths, nor their lives, can any inference be drawn with certainty.

[q] HORB. ſponde fide-jube. compoſitâ manu, ut mos eſt in fide-juſſionibus. Stipulare mihi. Druſ.

[r] Intelligit librum publicum, in quo acta publica notabantur, a ſcribis civitatum, in eorum tabulis reponenda. Schult.

Velim a parte Dei inſtrumentum litis, et accuſationis meæ ſummam conſcribi, et in judicium adverſus me preferri in libello. Id. in v. 23.

Ch. xxii. Eliphaz reproves him once more, for his calling God to judgement upon him, and argues, how unequal Job was to ſtand ſuch a tryal, he, whom he accuſes of abjectneſs and meanneſs, of rapine and extortion; of uncharitableneſs and inhumanity. Then exhorts him to repentance, as the only means of averting the juſt judgements of God, and being reſtored again to the divine favor.

Ch. xxiii. xxiv. Exaſperated at ſo round a charge upon him, Job no longer contains himſelf. Not content with the demand, he had ſo oft, and ſo inſolently repeated, of ordering his cauſe before God, he expreſſes his impatience to find him out, to come even unto his ſeat; complains, that God avoided the interview; that it was denied him to ſee God, and reaſon with him upon his caſe; that, were a ſight of God but once indulged him, he would order his cauſe, in form, before him, would fill his mouth with arguments; would anſwer to every thing, he had to object to him [f]. If this be not inſolence, and preſumption, if ſetting God at open defiance be not blaſphemy; what is?

Ch. xxv. Bildad cloſes the pleadings, on the ſide of the proſecutors, with juſt obſerving, how impertinent, and inſolent, Job's defenſe had all along been, in reſting the merits of his cauſe upon an appeal to God; for what was man; what was the beſt of men, that he could preſume to juſtify himſelf before God?

Ch. xxvi. xxvii. xxviii. xxix. xxx. xxxi. contain Job's replication to the proſecutor's charge, and are a labored recapitulation of what he had offered, in the courſe of his defenſe; he perſiſts ſtill in his complaint, that *God had taken away his judgement*, had denied him that acceſs, and precluded him that appeal to his tribunal, which he had demanded. After the moſt ſolemn aſſeverations of his innocence, and of his reſolutions to perſiſt in it, he harangues at large upon the juſtice, and goodneſs of God, and then concludes with the old demand upon him, to give him the hearing in perſon.

For thus he ſpeaks. *O that one would hear me; behold my deſire is, that the Almighty would anſwer me, and that mine adverſary had written a book.* ISH RIBI. *adverſarius meus. litigator. actor.* my proſecutor, my impleader, *i. e.* Would to God, that he himſelf would vouchſafe to implead me, to inſtitute a proceſs, and prefer a libel, in open court, againſt me. *Surely I would take it upon my ſhoulder, and bind it as a crown unto me; I would declare unto him the number of my ſteps, as a prince, would I go near unto him.* So far would I be from approaching him as a criminal, with fear and trembling, that I would advance with all the undauntedneſs, and firmneſs, of a prince, who had nothing to fear from him.

Here the whole pleadings, between Job and the three friends, come to a concluſion. All their arguments are exhauſted. The matter, in diſpute

[f] In hoc cap. Job non ad Dei tribunal provocat: ſed cum numine ipſo ſe congredi paratiſſimum oſtendit ad cauſam ſuam ſuſtinendam. Dolet interim acerbiſſime ſibi aditum ad Dei ipſius ſolium penitus denegatum, et precluſum. Schult.

between them, reſts juſt where it began. Much altercation and debate, much eloquence and harangue, paſs on each ſide the queſtion, but no determination is made on one ſide or other. The great point remains ſtill in ſuſpenſe, whether the appeal, Job had made to God himſelf, in judgement, would be admitted, and the cauſe transferred to his tribunal?

Ch. xxxii. xxxiii. xxxiv. xxxv. xxxvi. xxxvii. In this plunge, Elihu, the perſon, who had hitherto attended to the whole pleadings, and ſate ſilent, interpoſes. He prefaces his ſpeech, with acquainting Job, that as he expreſſed himſelf ſo utterly diſſatisfied with the proceedings againſt him thus far, by the three friends, and wiſhed ſo ardently to order his cauſe before God, and come even to his judgement ſeat, he himſelf ſate as God's repreſentative in the cauſe, and would call him to account, in that character. *Behold, I am, to thy wiſh, in God's ſtead.*

Thus therefore he accoſts him, *If thou canſt anſwer me, ſet thy words in order before me, ſtand up, behold I am to thy wiſh in God's ſtead, my terror ſhall not make thee afraid* [t]. The learned Mercier paraphraſes the words, "Come on then; ſuppoſe me for once to be God; I will act the part of God, and do thou, without fear or reſerve, enter the liſts with me, as thou wouldſt with God [v]." Thus ſummoned to tryal, Elihu takes him to taſk, and reproves him, over and over again, for that inſolent demand of his, to plead his cauſe before God. In their turn, he reproves the three friends, for the grimace, and hypocriſy, of the part they had acted, and always beſpeaks both theirs, and his, attention, by declaring, that he ſpeaks *in God's ſtead, and in God's behalf.*

Nothing ſo plain, as that Elihu, throughout his whole ſpeech, charges Job roundly with guilt, and taxes him all the way with inſolence, in aſſerting ſo confidently his integrity; in daring to appeal to God's tribunal, to juſtify what could not be juſtified; in ſpeaking irreverently of God, nay and blaſphemouſly. *For what man is like unto Job, who goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men, who drinketh up ſcorning like water? For he hath ſaid, it profiteth a man nothing, that he ſhould delight himſelf with God* [w]. And what reply makes Job to all this? Not a word.

Ch. xxxviii. xxxix. Thus far Elihu had ſat judge in the cauſe, and moderated the pleadings. Now agreeably to Job's wiſh, and conformably to that aſſurance, and confidence, which he had expreſſed, ſo ſolemnly, that *his redeemer liveth*, that *he ſhould ſtand at the latter day upon the earth*, and that *his eyes ſhould ſee God*; God himſelf deſcends to judgement, and accepts the appeal; not to ſooth his complaints; not to juſtify his innocence; not to cheriſh his confidence; but to convict him of guilt; to chaſtiſe his inſolence; and to humble him to repentance. Still preſerving therefore the form, and figure, of a judicial proceſs, God cites Job once more to the

[t] Eja age, finge tibi me eſſe Deum, ejus cauſam agam, mecum, ſi potes, ut cum Deo, libere et intrepidè congredere. ch. xxxiii. 6.

[w] Ch. xxxii. 9.

bar, to make good his allegations, and defend his innocence. He opens the court with a reproof upon Job, for his evaſions and inſincerity, in the courſe of his defenſe. *Who is this, that darkneth council with words, without underſtanding*[x] *?* The general account, I well know, of this reproof is, that God chaſtiſes him for his preſumption, in interpoſing his ſentiments about the divine councils. But the words have a ſtrict, and proper, forenſic ſenſe, and in that ſenſe, and that only, we ſhould conſider them in a work, like this, of a forenſic nature.

MAKAS GNETSAH. obſcurare conſilium. is to *darken*, to *confound*, to *perplex*, an argument, or pleading, either by impertinent ſuggeſtions, or tedious harangues, by introducing matter foreign to the argument, or puzzling the cauſe with little quirks, and evaſions. Tully defines it, "inveloping a cauſe in darkneſs, by extenuating, or confounding the cauſe, with throwing out preſumptions of the pleader's own, more or leſs clear." And a great maſter of forenſic matters calls it, "a ſuſpicious kind of explanation of the buſineſs in hand[y]." So that the true meaning, and ſpirit, of the reproof is, "Who is this, that thus artfully, and like ſome venal orator, is perplexing the cauſe, and confounding it, with pleadings foreign to the purpoſe?"

After this ſevere ſtricture, upon Job's manner of conducting his defenſe, God accepts the challenge, he had ſo oft repeated, and bids him prepare for the tryal. *Gird up now thy loins, like a man, for I will,* SHAAL, *demand of thee*, call thee to account as a criminal, and *do thou*, as thou haſt ſo oft inſiſted upon it, HANAH, *anſwer me*; make thy defenſe in form. It is a miſtake, as I have already obſerved, in Schultens, and the reſt of the commentators, to imagine, that *girding up the loins*[z], is preparing, like a combatant, for battle; it is a metaphor, taken from the manner of collecting the robe round the body, among pleaders and orators, the diſpoſition of which, as may be ſeen in antient ſtatues, and paintings, gave great grace, and expreſſion, to the ſpeaker. "Prepare thyſelf therefore, ſays God, for the pleadings, collect thy robe about thee."

The whole of God's expoſtulations with Job, turns upon Job's preſumption, in pretending to enter into the ſecrets of providence, and daring to throw himſelf upon his tryal, before the ſearcher of all hearts, and ſeeking to maintain, what could not be maintained, his innocence. Omnipotence is the attribute of the Deity, upon which the greateſt ſtreſs is laid, and his daring to provoke that, and call his juſtice in queſtion, is the point, which is more particularly inſiſted upon. God concludes, and waits Job's anſwer, but not a ſyllable has he to offer in his defenſe.

[x] Ch. xxxviii. 2. [y] Obſcurare litem. tenebras obducere liti, et preſumptiones clariores narrando, aut aliàs, obſcuras facere et extenuare. Cicero.

Narratio actoris erit geſti negotii ſuſpicioſa explicatio, ſparſis omnibus argumentis, obſcuratis defenſionibus. Defenſori autem preteritis, aut obſcuratis, ſuſpicionum argumentis, rerum ipſarum erunt eventus caſuſque narrandi. Budæus Forenſia. [z] Compare Jerem. i. 17.

Ch. xl. xli. God reſumes his expoſtulations with him, and calls upon him to anſwer this one queſtion. Whether he thought he had received chaſtiſement enough for all his preſumption, at his hands? for ſo the words ſhould be tranſlated, and not, as they are, *ſhall he, that contendeth with the Almighty, inſtruct him* [a] *?* i. e. Haſt not thou received, from me, deſerved reproof? Have not I convinced thee ſufficiently of thy preſumption, and folly, who knoweſt ſo little of the natural world, and yet pretendeſt to enter into the ſecrets of the moral world; who haſt dared to call me, in perſon, to ſit in judgement upon thy innocence. *He that reproveth God, let him anſwer it.* Upon this, Job begins to relent, and diſclaims his innocence. *Behold I am vile, what ſhall I anſwer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I ſpoken, but I will not reply, yea twice, but I will proceed no farther.*

Pauſing here a while, God once more demands of him, to produce thoſe mighty proofs of his innocence, which he had ſo confidently aſſerted, and ſet forth thoſe powerful pleadings, which, from the beginning to the end of his defence, he had boaſted ſo much of. He gives him the alternative, he had demanded, ch. xiii., of being plaintiff, or defendant, nay of being judge, in his own cauſe. *Deck thyſelf now with majeſty and excellency, and array thyſelf with glory* [b]. "Sit in all the pomp and majeſty, all the ſtate and glory, of a judge." *Caſt abroad the rage of thy wrath, and behold every one that is proud, and abaſe him.* "Exert the authority of that high office, and ſilence all that preſume to offend thee. *Then will I myſelf alſo confeſs unto thee, that thine own right hand can ſave thee.* "I will be content to ſubmit to thine own determination, and if, upon a fair and impartial tryal, thou canſt acquit thyſelf, I will acquit thee."

Ch. xlii. Job, convinced at laſt, by that magnificent diſplay of God's omnipotence, which runs through the whole of both his, and Elihu's ſpeech, and is indeed the only argument, that convinces him, comes to terms of humiliation, and confeſſion. *I know, that thou canſt do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.* He acknowledges the juſtice of that firſt reproof of God's, *Who is this, that darkneth council with words without underſtanding?* that he is the perſon, who had all along *uttered what he underſtood not, things, too wonderful for him, which he knew not.*

Fairly convicted of guilt, and confidence, in the appeal, which he had made to God's judgement-ſeat, he takes ſhame to himſelf, and gives up, once for all, the whole plea of his innocence, acknowledges the favor, vouchſafed him, of ſeeing God, the great object of all his wiſhes, the ſingle point, which he had been laboring throughout his whole tryal. *I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye ſeeth thee, wherefore I abhor myſelf and repent in duſt and aſhes* [c]. Upon this, the Lord turneth the captivity of Job, and reſtores him, round and entire, to all his former fortunes, and friends.

Judge now, if Job, upon this repreſentation of him, in the book which

[a] Ch. xl. 2. Schultens in loc. [b] Ch. xl. 19. [c] Ch. xlii. v. 5.

bears

bears his name, be the patient, the pious, the perfect character, which we are apt to conceive him; if he be *the perfect, the upright man, one who feared God, and eſchewed evil*, which he appears to be, in the two firſt chapters; if all the learned labor, which has been beſtowed, upon his ſeeing this deliverer of his, proceeds not upon a wrong foundation.

We may call this repreſentation, if we pleaſe, a picture of human life, as it has been called, and, without any flattering of the original, it may be ſo; but ſurely we ſhall hardly call it a picture of either patience, or piety. For ſtrip the book of the two firſt chapters, I would aſk the moſt zealous advocate for him, if he had never heard before of Job's piety, or patience, whether either of theſe two virtues appear to him ſtriking, or conſpicuous? Nay I would go farther, and ſubmit it to him, whether, in that caſe, he ſhould not have concluded, from his ſetting out, as he does, that he was blaſpheming; from his expoſtulations, as he goes on, that he was preſumptuous; from his querulouſneſs, and peeviſhneſs all along, that he was impatient?

The very lateſt examiners of the part, he acts, ſee and confeſs, what they muſt have winked hard, if they had not ſeen, great inconſiſtency in it, and the moſt determined defenders of him muſt be happy indeed at diſtinguiſhing, if they reconcile all this inconſiſtency with character. For it will by no means do the buſineſs, to produce detached texts, and accumulate, as they are apt to do, paſſage upon paſſage, where Job expreſſes his ſentiments, and ſublime ones too, upon providence and virtue, for this will readily be allowed them, and is the very circumſtance, which makes the inconſiſtency. But the buſineſs is, from this repreſentation of him, to acquit Job of, what God acquits him not, impatience and impiety; to make of him one uniform character; and ſee, if by any reaſonings upon this repreſentation of him, he be, in fact, the patient Job, which we have been taught all along to think him.

If not, then ſome other principle muſt be ſought for, to elicit any inſtruction from this repreſentation, or to form any judgement at all upon it. That principle, we ſay, is the allegory couched under it. The Jews, in their captivity, are the perſons ſhadowed under Job, in his afflictions. 'Tis their impatience, their impiety, their confidence of their innocence, that is expoſed in the courſe of the tryal, and it is their reſtoration, that is pointed out, in the concluſion, as the effect of Job's repentance.

An indictment is preferred againſt the Jews, by the three advocates, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. Job, their proxy, pleads to it, "not guilty." They ſet out to make good their charge againſt him; he, to invalidate it. He laviſhes all his rhetoric, to defend his client's innocence, and ſpeaks of courſe the language, they would ſpeak themſelves, in their defenſe; they exert all their eloquence to prove his guilt. Elihu ſits, as God's repreſentative in the cauſe, and moderates the pleadings. At laſt, God himſelf as the ſupreme judge, appealed to all along, takes the matter into his own hands, convicts the defendant of guilt, brings him to confeſſion

feſſion and repentance; and then exerts the royal prerogative, in granting him a free pardon, and reſtores him.

This, upon the moſt attentive review of the book, appears to me to be the diſpoſition of it; for as to the argumentative part, I have nothing farther to add, and ſate down only to give the reader an inſight into the ſtructure and mechaniſm, not the reaſonings of the book, to ſhew him, that it was not either of the narrative, or hiſtoric, but of the forenſic kind, that the materials are all of this ſort, and the work itſelf a judicial, or criminal proceſs.

Neither is it difficult to conjecture, whence the ſacred author took the hint, of conducting his performance in this ſhape, when we recollect that repeated demand of the Jews, in their captivity, to plead their own cauſe, and make good their innocence, in a judicial way, before God. Look into the books of Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, the two prophets, who went into captivity with them, you will ſee, that the one favorite point, amidſt all their murmurings, was to plead their own cauſe, to diſpute, and reaſon with God, upon the ſubject of their captivity, to argue with him the equality of his proceedings, and juſtify their innocence. See through all the prophets the condeſcenſion, on God's ſide, Come now, and *let us reaſon*, i. e. litigate the point, together. Upon this repeated demand of theirs, copied with great exactneſs into Job's ſtory, iſſue is joined with them, in the book before us, in the perſon of Job, their proxy, and a proceſs in form is inſtituted againſt them. Nor indeed could there have been a more effectual method taken, to come at the true ſtate of the caſe with them. The conviction of Job was then to ſtand upon fact, and evidence. His acquittal, or condemnation, was to be in the hands of God. The Jews could not but ſee the juſtice, and propriety, of ſo innocent a piece of artifice, and ſtand convicted by it.

It was the ſage advice of Diocles to the Athenian ſenate, when they were deliberating about putting a perſon to death, for impiety, without ſo much as a tryal; firſt to bring him to their bar, and impeach him publickly, not ſo much for his own ſake, as to teach the reſt of the citizens reverence[c]. What he counſelled, for the benefit of his countrymen, the author of the book of Job practiſed, for the benefit of the Jews; he puts Job, their repreſentative, upon an open tryal, convicts him publickly of guilt, and reſtores him, by act of meer grace; the one, to teach them the falſity of that plea of theirs, their innocence, the other, to ſhew them the poſſibility of their reſtoration.

Neither is this forenſic manner of writing ſo very ſtrange, and unprecedented, as we are apt to conceive it. A proceſs of exactly the ſame kind, in miniature, we have pointed out in that viſion of Zechariah's, where, under the type of Joſhuah the high-prieſt, the whole Jewiſh nation is impleaded. Joſhuah ſtands, as the party accuſed, before the angel of God, the judge. Satan ſtands at the right hand of God, the place always of

[c] Lyſiæ Orat. 4to. p. 130. ex edit. Cl. Taylor.

the

the accuſer. The angel acquits Joſhuah, and the reſtoration of the Jewiſh church, under this type, is promiſed [d].

St. Paul's epiſtle to the Romans, addreſſed, as it is in general, to the judaizing chriſtians, abounds with forenſic alluſions, and the doctrine, there and elſewhere purſued, of final juſtification, reſts upon the proper notion of a judicial juſtification, or acquittal at the judgement-ſeat of God. Indeed the word itſelf is ſtrictly a forenſic one, and our learned Hammond well obſerves upon it, that it implies a legal proceeding, and therein, a client, a law, and a judge. Thus when a man is ſaid to be juſtified by the works of the law, Man is ſuppoſed the client, impleaded by Satan, the Ἀντίδικος, accuſer; God ſits as judge; and the law, by which man is tried, is Moſes's. And even thus is the day of judgement repreſented in ſcripture. Sin will then be the accuſer of the world; Man the client; Chriſt the mediator; and God the judge [e].

Upon theſe principles, the learned Mercier has given the reſolution of the whole book of Job [f], and though we have but few or no records remaining, of the preciſe forms of judicial cauſes, or criminal proceſſes, among the jews, there are traces enough left to collect, that they differed not, materially, from thoſe of the reſt of the world. The law of Moſes was their grand code, and judges were appointed under it, to decide in all cauſes, both civil and criminal.

The greek orators furniſh us with many ſpeeches, in proceſſes of both kinds. In ſome of them, we find the Δικη Ἱεροσυλιας. Δικη Ἀσεβειας. Cauſes of ſacrilege. Cauſes of impiety. And though they give us not the minutes of each particular proceſs, yet it is not difficult to trace the places, in each oration, where the indictment was read; the witneſſes called; the points argued; the laws cited; the facts proved; and the judgement of the court pronounced. Theſe indeed are ſo many authentic pieces. But beſides theſe, they had their works of imagination. What the great orators practiſed in real cauſes, the later rhetoricians practiſed in fictitious ones, and what was the proper employ of the former, became an exerciſe of genius, and ſtile, in the latter.

Thus, Τινας ἂν εἰποι λογους, &c. "What would Hercules or Hector; David or Joſeph; ſay, upon ſuch and ſuch occaſions? was the common tryal of ſkill among thoſe writers, and all their buſineſs was, to perſonate the character before them, and put nothing into the mouth of David or Joſeph, Hercules or Hector, but what each might be ſuppoſed to ſay, in thoſe circumſtances [g]." The experiment ſucceeded to admiration, and it has been with difficulty, that the artifice was detected, and the ſeveral

[d] Zech. iii. Diſſ. p. 278. [e] Hammond's Paraph. Rom. iii. 4. notis. [f] MISHPAT. judicium. tria continet. Initium judicii, nempe contentionem verborum inter litigatores. Medium judicii, nempe pronuntiationem ſententiæ. Finem judicii, nempe executionem ſententiæ. Unde judicii nomen, in hoc libro, ad horum unumquodque paſſim refertur. Hic initium judicii ſignificat, nempe forenſem inter litigatores contentionem, &c. Mercer in ix. 31. xiii. 18. [g] Τινας ἂν ειποι λογους ὁ Ιωσηφ ὑπο της Αιγυπτιας γυναικος καλλιγοραθεις. τινας ὁ Δαβιδ διωκομενος ὑπο του Σαυλ. Niceph. Baſ. Ethop.

ſpeeches

ſpeeches found at laſt to be neither Hercules's, nor Hector's, but the Sophiſt's.

In Severus Alexandrinus, there are no leſs than eight of thoſe Ηθοποιΐαι, and, to mention no more, Libanius hath two folio volumes of declamatory ſpeeches, made all upon fictitious ſubjects, yet written with an air of great ſerioufneſs, and with much attic elegance. In one of them, Demoſthenes is brought to the bar, and makes his defenſe in the ſenate of Athens. In another, Socrates appears in court, and a defenſe is made for him. In a third, Menelaus, Ulyſſes, Achilles, and Patroclus, ſtand before the council in the trojan camp, and expoſtulate, each in his turn, the matter of the rape of Helen [h].

Theſe ſpeeches are, all of them, conducted in the ſolemnity of a judicial tryal, and ſtrict propriety of character, before the ſenate, and it has fared with them, as with the book of Job, that they have had the good luck to be applied, by later writers, as ſo many genuin ſpeeches, to the ſeveral purpoſes of philology, antiquity, hiſtory, and chronology, juſt as occaſion required; nay it is a truth, by this time well known, that even the learned Meurſius, in his *Themis Attica*, has cited from them athenian laws and cuſtoms, which were never heard of at Athens.

The artifice of thoſe writers was however innocent, and uſeful, till not content with a competent ſhare of applauſe, they began to palm upon the world their own compoſitions, for ſo many genuin ſpeeches, and availed themſelves of them in the mercantile way. Still this ſhews, that this fictitious manner of writing was of much earlier date, than we are apt to give it credit for, and had both its uſe, and its merit, in the learned world. And whether thoſe cauſes, which Budæus, an author of great name in the forenſic part of learning, calls *cauſæ perſonatæ, & adumbratæ*, might not be of this kind, is a queſtion [i].

The dialogue-writing was ſtill more antient; as old as the Socratic ſchool. What think we of thoſe dialogues of the greek, and roman, philoſophers, the Phædo, the Timæus, of Plato; the Books of laws, the Tuſculan queſtions of Cicero, where even the moſt fundamental points of morality are treated in the way of converſation? Little acquainted we muſt be with thoſe writers, to imagine, that any ſuch converſations were held, and that they are not works of meer imagination [k]. Tully fairly gives the reaſon, why he threw his philoſophic works into this form, becauſe it was the old ſocratic way of arguing againſt another man's opinion; and the eaſieſt for coming at truth, and therefore he diſpoſes thoſe arguments, juſt as if the thing was acting, not as if it were telling; and ſo far theſe pieces may be conſidered as dramatical.

[h] Libanii Προγυμνασματα.

[i] Cauſæ adumbratæ, et perſonatæ, ſunt quæ litigatoris nomen præferunt, ad quem res non pertinet, niſi quatenus pretio perſonam agit, quam utendam vero adverſario dedit. Budæus. Forenſia, p. 95.

[k] Puto fore, ut cum legeris, mirere id nos locutos eſſe quod nunquam locuti ſumus, ſed noſti morem dialogorum. Cic. Ep. Fam. ix.

Mr. Worthington therefore, properly enough, ſuppoſes ſomething of this kind of conference between Job, and the three friends; that they had frequent meetings, and diſcuſſed ſeveral queſtions of philoſophy, in the way of ſpeculative debate; ſomething, I ſuppoſe, like the meetings of Cato, Brutus, Craſſus, and Tully, at his tuſculan ſeat, that the three friends maintained the pythagorean philoſophy, and Job the contrary. I can by no means agree with the learned author, about the philoſophy of the diſputants, yet ſome account, like this, of the conference between them, I conceive pretty near the truth, without being liable to that ridiculous repreſentation of his, "of ſetting up a man of ſtraw, only in order to demoliſh him;" a repreſentation, as unfriendly to his own hypotheſis, as injurious to the antient dialogue.

It is not difficult, I think, to trace ſomething of this kind of fictitious, or perſonated character, in St. Paul's writings. His epiſtle to the Romans, in particular, is hardly intelligible upon any other plan, and his acquaintance with the greek ſchool will account for it. There he ſometimes perſonates the jew, ſometimes the gentile; ſometimes the regenerate, at others, the unregenerate chriſtian. Now, he ſpeaks as an apoſtle, then again, ἀνθρωπινον, after the manner of men. But the moſt maſterly ſtroke of all is, when he frames his diſcourſe in ſuch an artful manner, as to demonſtrate the inſufficiency of the jewiſh law, under color of vindicating it upon jewiſh principles.

Without this key, there is no coming at his true meaning, in the vii. ch. particularly. And that it is the true one to ſuch parts of his writings, he has hinted to the Corinthians. *Theſe things, brethren, I have*, in a figure, *transferred to myſelf, and Apollos, for your ſakes*. He had introduced Paul, and Apollos, ſpeaking, as the two heads of two diſtinct factions among them; not that they were ſo, or that they ſpoke ſo, but in condeſcenſion to the Corinthians conceptions, and to ſhew them, what language the two factions ſpoke, and on which ſide the better of the argument laid. And this perſonated character of St. Paul it is, that the beſt commentators, and two of our moſt judicious paraphraſts, have adopted in the reſolution of his epiſtle to the Romans [l].

To repeat therefore my own ſentiments freely, with regard to the book of Job. I take it to be a piece of the dramatic kind, a work of imagination, artfully contrived, and conducted throughout in perſonated, allegoric, character [m]. When I call it a work of imagination, it is in the ſame ſenſe, that the reſt of the poetical books of ſcripture, which have ever been allowed to have the higheſt claim to inſpiration, are ſo. It muſt be either the groſſeſt ignorance, or the moſt extreme perverſeneſs, that puts any leſs favorable conſtruction upon the words. The whole book of Pſalms; that beautiful ſoliloquy, the Lamentations; ſome of the ſublimeſt paſſages in the Prophets;

[l] Lock's, and Taylor's paraphraſe.

[m] Quidam totam hanc diſputationem confuſam putant per otium; & de induſtria, ſimilia invenies apud Ariſtotelem & philoſophos, ubi opiniones variorum afferuntur, qui omnia numerârint, quæ de re controversâ ſentiri poterant. Mercer. pref. ad Comment. in Lib. Job.

many, even in the hiſtorical parts of ſcripture, are of the ſame claſs, thrown into a poetical dreſs, and diſpoſed in a manner ſomewhat, though not exactly, dramatical.

Whatever therefore is advanced, in the following ſheets, concerning the drama, I ſhall wiſh to be underſtood with ſome reſtriction; for, upon a review of the whole, I muſt confeſs my ſelf but little ſolicitous, about the preciſe notion of it. All I would be thought to contend for is, that, like the mimes, or perſonated pieces, of early times, like thoſe interludes, ſcattered here and there in the prophets, in order to have any idea of the nature of the compoſition, ſomething ſcenical, and dramatical, muſt be ſuppoſed in the conduct of it; either that it was exhibited in action, or compoſed at leaſt in ſuch a manner, as repreſentations, thus exhibited, were wont to be; that it is neither hiſtory, nor fact; no real converſation, but a fictitious one; and if I might be allowed to call it ſo, a forenſic drama [n].

The reader will comprehend me beſt, when I refer him to a compoſition now before me, which rounds my own notion of it, and will contribute to form his; a compoſition, to which the chriſtian world is greatly indebted, for the vindication of the moſt material fact in the whole goſpel, and of the moſt fundamental article of the chriſtian faith. It is "The Tryal of the Witneſſes of the Reſurrection of Jeſus;" a work, I apprehend, both of the dramatic and allegoric caſt. The buſineſs of it is to refute Mr. Woolſton's vi^th Diſcourſe, wherein he had undertaken to expoſe the miracle of the reſurrection of Jeſus, or rather indeed to prove it a downright forgery. To ſet the matter in a proper light, the learned author throws his work into the form of a tryal, at bar, of the twelve apoſtles, the better to come at the evidence, and ſtate the fact, of the reſurrection.

Here we have a court ſitting; a judge and jury; council on both ſides; witneſſes examined; ſome pleadings over-ruled; others admitted; a fact proved; and ſentence, in favor of the twelve apoſtles, given in form; all the characters, in ſhort, of a genuin tryal, and yet the whole is matter of meer invention. Some centuries hence, this may chance to fall into the hands of ſome ſagacious reader, who may take it, with all theſe authentic marks about it, for a real tryal; eſpecially when ſome accident ſhall have ſtript it of its introduction, and concluſion, or ſome enterprizing critick pronounce them ſpurious, or the work perhaps of ſome later ſophiſt. It may be adopted, for ought we know, for a piece of real hiſtory, and many a learned pen be drawn to authenticate the record.

The main difficulty is, how the putting the patient Job upon the impatient part, could be made, with any tolerable propriety, to anſwer the end, that we ſay was propoſed by it, the conviction of the impatient jew; for by this time, it will hardly bear a doubt, that his dramatic character is both

[n] Diſſ. p. 275.

impatience and blaſphemy [o]? Some account has been given of this matter, in the body of the diſſertation [p], and ſhould the reader expect any farther ſatisfaction, all I can ſay is, that nothing could expoſe the folly, and impiety, of impatience more, than exhibiting one of the moſt patient men living, in all the exceſs and intemperance of it. Nothing could ſo effectually confute the abſurd reaſonings of the abandoned jew, as putting them all into the mouth of ſo perfect and upright a man, as Job.

'Tis true, it is taking him out of character. And what then? So is Tully out of character, when, occaſionally in his philoſophic works, he perſonates the ſtoick; when in other parts of his writings, he perſonates the ſtateſman, or the ſophiſt; when, in his orations, he puts on the advocate. The whole art, and buſineſs, of perſonating ſuch a variety of characters, is to draw forth the ſentiments, and ſpeak the language, of the reſpective parties, and by confuting their opinions, to eſtabliſh his own. No ſenſible reader places to Tully's account, what he ſpeaks only in perſonated character.

In his oration for P. Sylla, he gives the true key to his manner of ſpeaking, as an advocate. Torquatus had charged him with ſpeaking, in Sylla's defenſe, when he had either declined the defenſe of the reſt of the conſpirators, or had ſpoke with great vehemence againſt them, and particularly, againſt Antronius. "If, ſays he, Torquatus, you fix the character of cruelty for "ever on me, becauſe of my behaviour on that occaſion, you miſtake me "greatly. My nature calls for humanity, my country for ſeverity, but "neither my nature, nor my country, for cruelty. The perſonated charac-"ter, of vehemence and cruelty, which the neceſſity of the times, and the "republick, then laid upon me, my own inclinations, and my nature, "have now diveſted me of. The republick demanded of me, for a while, "ſeverity, but my own nature, always, calls for humanity."

Humanity, we ſee, was Tully's proper character, Job's was patience; yet Tully could be ſevere, when the exigencies of the times called for ſeverity, as Job might be impatient, when ſo good an end was anſwered by it. Both were only advocates, both therefore at liberty to ſpeak in that capacity, which beſt anſwered thoſe exigencies. At leaſt, the author of the book of Job has taken no greater freedom with his hero, than Tully took with himſelf.

[o] Difficilis exoritur hoc loco queſtio, quæ multos torſit. Quomodo Job, qui patientiæ exemplum habetur, ita deinceps in hoc capite, & per totum pene librum, in blaſphemas & impias voces prorumpat, ut impatientiæ potiùs exemplum dici mereatur, ſi nuda ipſius verba conſideres. Alii eum blaſphemum, & reprobum plane hominem, quem tandem pœnituerit. Talmudici dicunt graviora, ſe Dei imaginem convellere, ac eum judicio omni, & juſtitiâ, ſpoliare. Nos autem mediâ viâ inſiſtere oportet, ut Jobum a peccato omni, & blaſphemiâ, non excuſemus quidem. Itaque verbum, KALAL, maledicere proprie ſumimus. Mercer. in ch. iii. Primus actus rarum Dei judicium proponit, & variâ cruce exercet Jobum, ubi primus patientiſſimus, poſtea impatientiſſimus, oſtenditur. Mercer Pref. Sunt & confidentiæ verba, & ſimul impatientiæ, in quâ immodicus eſt Job. Merc. in ch. xiii. 15.

[p] P. 293.

The difficulty is, how, at this diſtance of time, to come at Tully's real ſentiments, in his philoſophic works, amidſt the variety of characters he ſpeaks in. But difficulty there is none, in the caſe before us. Job's piety, and patience, are ſufficiently eſtabliſhed, at the firſt ſetting out, not to lead us into miſtakes about his genuin ſentiments. Job, in the prologue, is in proper character, perfect and upright. Job, in the drama, is out of character, blaſphemous and impatient. Some end, or other, was moſt certainly to be anſwered by ſuch a repreſentation, as this; and that, we ſay, was to expoſe the vice of impatience, by placing it in the moſt ridiculous light, in ſo patient a man, as Job.

This reſolution of the caſe will be ſtill more intelligible. Suppoſe a Rechabite introduced upon the ſtage, to recommend ſobriety, you will ſay of courſe, the beſt language, he could ſpeak, were to inculcate that family maxim of Jonadab, his father, "to drink no wine," and that this were acting in proper character. But take him out of character a while, and, in order to expoſe the vice of intemperance, let him rally, with all the jollity, and gaiety, of a downright debauchee, let him laugh at all the antiquated maxims of ſobriety. So long as you know him to be a Rechabite, and no debauchee, you cannot eaſily miſtake his meaning, how well ſoever he acts his part. Temperance will be recommended, becauſe intemperance is expoſed, in the higheſt inſtance poſſible.

Something there is in human nature, that recoils at ſuch repreſentations, more than at all the leſſons of virtue; that feels more exquiſitely, the reproof of ſuch pieces of artifice, than of all the grave rebukes of philoſophy. What is familiar, and paſſes unobſerved, in a man's ſelf, grows odious and inſupportable, when viewed in his picture, where the features are full charged, and every line is drawn in all its deformity.

The known ſtory of the Theſſalian tyrant * ſhews, how quick the operation is of ſuch artifice. He was in the theatre, when the Hecuba of Euripides was acting, and retired precipitately out of it, before the ſecond act. The diſtreſs of Hecuba, and Polyxena, drew tears from him, that, he owned, he was aſhamed to ſhed, when he reflected upon the diſtreſs, he was daily introducing into families, by butchering ſo many citizens. The ſpirit of tyranny could not help relenting, when diſtreſs, ſo grievous, was painted in colors, ſo natural. The tyrant ſoftened into humanity, but not till inhumanity ſhewed itſelf in ſo deteſtable a ſhape.

Nathan's parable, of the Ewe-lamb, procedes upon the ſame principles, and was addreſſed to David, to convict him of the groſs injury, he had done to Uriah, the Hittite, by raviſhing his wife from his arms. David inſtantly acknowledges the injury done to the poor man, in the rich man's raviſhing his lamb from him; his wrath was kindled againſt him, and he pronounced immediately, that he ought to be put to death for it. The moment, that Nathan put the parable home to him, he felt the application, and confeſſed, he had ſinned againſt the Lord.

* Alexander Phereus.

I am

I am not fond of interpoſing any conjectures of mine, in a language, which I pretend not to any critical experience in, and have referred the reader therefore, all along, to better authority. But he muſt indulge me in one, which appears to me not unfavorable to the notion, inculcated in the following ſheets, that this book admits not of any date, earlier than the Babyloniſh captivity; for as to the author of it, that is, and muſt be, matter of meer conjecture.

Mention is made, ch. ix. 25. of poſts. *My days are ſwifter than a* poſt. Now certain it is, that the very firſt appointment, in the eaſt, of public poſts; their ſtages; their offices; their meſſengers; and their horſes; was by Cyrus, and Xenophon gives us the whole detail of their original eſtabliſhment. The firſt time we hear of them, in ſcripture, is Hezekiah's ſending poſts from Dan to Beer-ſheba, to give notice, through all the land of Iſrael, of his celebrating the feaſt of the paſſ-over †.

That the books of Chronicles were written after the captivity, is not doubted. But the book of Job is thought to have pretenſions to a date, a full thouſand years higher. Yet mention is made in it of poſts, and in no other book of ſcripture, that I can find, earlier than the captivity.

RATS, the original word, I very well know, ſignifies ſtrictly, *curſor*, a running footman; but look into the book of Eſther, written, no doubt, after the captivity, you will find the, RATSIM, poſts, mounted on horſeback, on dromedaries, on mules, and on camels, diſpatched by king Ahaſuerus, with letters to the lieutenants of the provinces, for the quicker proclamation of his royal decree *. [redacted]

If we reflect then upon the expedition, with which, expreſſes thus diſpatched, thus regularly conducted by ſet ſtages, and relays of horſes at each ſtage, as Xenophon deſcribes them, muſt move, the image, here in Job, will not only be intelligible, which it would hardly otherwiſe be, but beautiful, and appoſite. For whatever was the convenience, or ſecurity, of letters ſent by foot-meſſengers, ſurely diſpatch, and expedition, were no part of their recommendation. It was to remedy their inconvenience, that Cyrus firſt invented the uſe of poſt-horſes, and the fleetneſs, of ſuch expreſſes, gives us a very high idea of that hurry, and rapidity, with which Job's days flew, as it were, from him. *They are ſwifter than a poſt; they fly away; they are paſſed away, as the ſwift ſhips; as the eagle, that haſteth to the prey.* Xenophon tells us, that the expedition of the poſts was ſuch, that it was held to be quicker than the flight of cranes ‖.

We ſhould ſurely think it no unfair ſuſpicion, of the exiſtence of an engliſh author, after the RESTORATION, who ſpeaks of the public poſts in this kingdom, and an eaſtern author therefore, who mentions them in that part of the world, may well be ſuſpected to have lived after the CAPTIVITY.

† 2 Chr. xxx. 6. * Eſth. viii. 10. ‖ Xenoph. Cyr. Pæd. L. H.

A DISSER-



A DISSERTATION ON THE BOOK of *JOB*.

BOOK I. SECT. I.



HAVE oft been thinking that the book of Job, at a man's firſt entrance upon it, is to an enquirer what the holy land is to a traveller, a ſcene of infinite confuſion and admiration. No ſooner ſets the traveller foot into that country than he is ſtruck with a vaſt variety of ruins, he ſurveys the ſepulchres of prophets and the monuments of princes, with all the venerable marks of antiquity about them, but finds himſelf not unfrequently at a loſs to account for either the age or the religion they belong'd to.

If meer curioſity brought him thither, he may be content perhaps to ſpeculate upon the nature of the ſoil or the temper of the climate, to view the domes and porticos, the moſques and hermitages, which mahometan ſuperſtition has erected; but if either the regards of devotion or of inſtruction were his motives, if to viſit the genuin remains of Judea, and to ſurvey the ſcene of all thoſe great events, recorded in ſacred ſtory, were the errand he ſet out upon, he will ſoon be ſenſible of his diſappointment: and how confident ſoever he may be that he is treading upon the very ground, where holy men of God once trode, yet, upon farther enquiry, he will ſoon be convinc'd that thoſe foot-ſteps have long diſappear'd; that, ſince thoſe days, the ſepulchres of the prophets have undergone the ſucceſſive changes of cells or grottos for lazy monks or filthy dervizes; all that he can have any tolerable aſſurance of is, that the climate is the ſame, and whatever may be the changes either in the face of the country or in the manners of the people, yet at the bottom it is the holy ground he ſtands upon: and whatever the Saracen has defaced, or the Turk deſtroy'd, yet here it was that the temple of Solomon once ſtood, and the kings of Iſrael reign'd.

Juſt thus it fares with the adventurer in the book of Job; he no ſooner dips into it than he is ſtruck with a confuſed variety of eaſtern phraſe and imagery, with the loftineſs of its deſcriptions and the ſublimity of its ſentiments: alluſions ſtriking and beautiful to ſacred ſtory preſent themſelves in crowds to him, but, wrapt in poetic dreſs and heathen ornament, ſoon become ſuſpicious and precarious; and, juſt when he grows tempted to conclude the book a very authentic monument of the remoteſt hebrew antiquity, comes ſome aukward circumſtance or other, ſome unlucky fragment of arabian fiction or chaldean novelty, that diſconcerts all thoſe notions, and makes it ſavour of later times, if not perhaps of ſome different theology.

If his point be taſte or curioſity, the moſt enlarged and delicate of both cannot fail of being gratified with the elegancy of its ſtile, and the beauty of its figures: but if his enquiries extend themſelves to either the nature or the buſineſs of the performance, let him adopt what hypotheſis he will, he muſt find it extremely difficult to abide by it; for there is ſuch a mixture, to be found in it, of the ſacred and the profane, ſuch frequent returns of heathen amidſt hebrew theology, ſo much of pagan machinery in the ſtructure of the work, and at the ſame time ſo manifeſt are the remains of jewiſh materials in the foundation, that it will require a very uncommon

degree

degree of conſtancy to perſiſt in any one plan; and how confident ſoever he may be that ſome part or other of jewiſh hiſtory lies ſhadowed under it, he will frequently, to his great mortification, be loſing ſight of the moſt diſtant reſemblance.

Thus divided and perplex'd, no wonder that different enquirers have form'd ſo very different ſolutions of this compoſition; for ſo long as it remain'd a ſecret to the world, whether the original language of the book was hebrew, ſyriac, or arabic; whether the book it-ſelf was verſe or proſe; whether it was a real hiſtory or a work only of imagination; whether its author was a Jew or a pagan; whether the whole of it was compoſed by one and the ſame author or by different perſons and at different times; ſo long as theſe doubts remain'd unreſolv'd, it was in vain to hope for any agreement, each enquirer was left at liberty to form his own ſyſtem: and the world accordingly has been amuſed with ſolutions by turns upon the pagan and the jewiſh plan.

All that is hitherto agreed upon by the lateſt and beſt authors is, that the original language of this book was the hebrew, that the ſtile of it is verſe, and that the author of it was divinely inſpired, and ſome patriarch at leaſt, if not a prophet; its canonical authority has not been call'd in queſtion that I know of, in any chriſtian church whatever, and indeed ſtands independent of all the leſſer points in queſtion[a]; what is chiefly to be wonder'd at is, that, with all theſe indelible marks of ſacred antiquity annext to it, with all it's alluſions ſtrong and glaring to jewiſh ſtory there has diſcover'd its-ſelf, through all ages, a ſtrange jealouſy in giving it credit for any ſuch reſemblance; ſuch has been the ſuperſtition in the world in this reſpect, that ſcarce a writer, before Mr. Le Clerc[b], has dared to venture within the ſacred incloſures for any materials to explain and illuſtrate this book, lower than Moſes or Solomon: as if, to reſume the compariſon, there were the ſame danger from it, which Mr. Maundrell tells us there is in venturing within the area where Solomon's temple ſtood, of loſing either a man's life or his religion.[c]

Indeed the Rabbins, the great aſſertors of the high antiquity of this book, obſerv'd the alluſions in it to their law to be ſo frequent and numerous, that, in order to get rid of ſo preſſing a circumſtance in

[a] Autoritas hujus libri non pendet ab amanuenſibus, ſed a teſtimonio ipſo S. S. librorumque materiâ, ſtylo, antiquitate, relatione in Canonem, & criteriis aliis ἀυθεντιας & quantum de ſcriptore controvertitur, tantum convenit de autoritate Judæos inter & Chriſtianos. Fr. Spanh. *Hiſt. Job.* 524. [b] Clerici Comment. in Job. & Sentimens des quelques. *Theolog. Holland.* p. 182. [c] Maundrell's *travels*, p. 37.

favor of ſome date lower than they were willing to allow it, they found themſelves oblig'd to have recourſe to ſo wretched an expedient, as that of ſuppoſing that the law of Moſes was ſpoken of prophetically in it; [c] the truth is, they muſt have been hardy indeed not to confeſs what they cou'd not but ſee, but in their way were laid their traditions, of which theſe alluſions were, at firſt ſight, too clearly deſtructive to be admitted but under favor of ſo many prophetic anticipations; and tho' the later Jews ſaw that ſomething the book had plainly to do with a captivity and a deliverance, and were led from thence to conclude that the Egyptian bondage, and the deliverance of the Iſraelites from it, might poſſibly be the ſubject of it [d]; yet could not all this, nor even the very language of their law ſo viſibly copied into it, prevail upon them to bring down the date of it lower than that event, nor indeed to fix it with any certainty to the event it's-ſelf; the antient prejudice, that as old at leaſt as Moſes it muſt be, ſtill obtain'd, and that long before the giving of the law it muſt have been written, tho' many both of its ritual and moral precepts are preſerv'd in it.

From henceforward this opinion, with all its abſurdity, ſeems to have prevail'd in the world, and, like all other prejudices, grew the more inveterate for its age, till at length it was well nigh pleading preſcription from time immemorial. The learned Grotius indeed interpoſed a conjecture, that gave ſome check to this opinion, and that was, that the book was written to confirm the poſterity of Eſau, during their captivity at Babylon, in the worſhip of the one God [e]; and yet, how this is to be reconciled with the very firſt conjecture of that learned author, that the fact recorded in this book, muſt have happen'd whilſt the Hebrews abode in the wilderneſs, is to me inconceivable; after him Le-Clerc took up that antient notion of the Rabbins, mention'd by Maimonides, that it was compoſed for the ſelf ſame end indeed, but for the benefit of the Jews in the Babyloniſh captivity [f]; both which ſchemes agree, we may obſerve, in this

[c] Maimonides in More Nevochim, p. 3. c. 22.

[d] Ad ſolatium gentis Iſraeliticæ fuiſſe ſcriptum, cum Egyptiorum tyrannide premeretur, mihi ſane videtur perquam probabile. Ea eſt Talmudiſtarum ſententia in Bababathra, ea R. Dav. Kimchi & Rabb. plurimorum. Eandem opinionem Origines, Methodius, Polychronius, eandemque bene multi recentiores. Id ipſum ſenſiſſe Hieronymum diſcas ex Ep. ad Paul. Huet. *Dem. Ev.* p. 226.

[e] Videtur propoſitum fuiſſe ſcriptori poſteros Eſavi, a Babyloniis tranſportatos, tam illuſtri exemplo confirmare ad unius Dei cultum retinendum, &c. Grot. *Com. in* Job. I. 1.

[f] Sentimens de quelques Theol. Holl. p. 184. & Cl. Com. in Job. I. 1. Maimon. More Nevochim, p. 3. c. 22.

one point, that a captivity and a deliverance were plainly the ſubjects of it, and they differ only as to the objects of that captivity.

But the misfortune was, that the ſhifting of this performance off from any jewiſh writer, and placing it to the account of either ſome patriarch, or, as ſome hebrew and chriſtian writers too have done, of ſome gentile author [g], produc'd one very ill conſequence, and that was, the ſuppoſing it an heathen performance: the reverſe of wrong, we know, is too apt to be miſtaken for right, and if the author was no Jew, the concluſion was plauſible enough, conſidering the early date of the book, that he muſt be a gentile, eſpecially if we take into the account the many viſible traces of heathen machinery in the ſtructure of the poem.

And this it probably was that led an author of great name [h], about the cloſe of the IVth century, into an opinion, for which in the fifth general council, almoſt a whole century after his death, his works were condemn'd [i]; it was Theodore, biſhop of Mopſueſta in Cilicia, who, among other things, had maintain'd, in his commentary upon the book of Job, "that its author was ſome learned pagan, and that ſpeaking of Amalthea-cornu, or Keran-happuch, Job's third daughter, he had ſhewn himſelf a friend to pagan fables, and a lover of the fictions of idolatry;" and the reaſon alledg'd for it is, "that it was impoſſible that Job, an Edomite, and a Barbarian, cou'd be acquainted with thoſe pagan fables of Jupiter, Juno, and Saturn [k]." His commentary has long been loſt, but from the ſpecimen of it, preſerv'd in the acts of that council, the world has no great loſs of it, and there remains enough of it to ſhew his reaſons for fixing ſo vile a calumny on the author of this book, he obſerves indeed, "that he had imitated the authors of theatrical compoſitions, who ſearch in hiſtory for a real ſubject, which they afterwards adjuſt to their own purpoſe, and mix with it diverſe circumſtances of their own imagination, that they too often embelliſh their ſubject at the expence of truth, in order to give it an air of the marvelous; inſomuch that he, who has given us the book of Job, has rather ſtudied to intro-

[g] Gentilem fuiſſe Jobum, uti & amicos, Hebræi ſenſere; ſic naturalem modo religionem, ſolum naturalis luminis uſum adſcribunt Jobo nonnulli Patrum. Sic Chryſoſt. in Proœm. Cat. Pat. ſic Gregorius M. in Moral. ad Job. Fr. Spanheim. *Hiſt. Job.* p. 323.

[h] Πασης μεν Ἐκκλησιας διδασκαλος, καὶα πασης τι φαλαγγος αἱρεσιωτας. Theodoret. l. iv. c. 40.

[i] Concil. gen. Tom. V. p. 451. Ed. Lab.

[k] Quod Pagana ſapiens hunc librum ſcripſit. Quod de tertiâ filiâ Jobi Amaltheæ cornu, loquens, oſtendit eum paganicis fabulis aſſentientem, & idololatriæ figmenta diligentem, quod nec ſcire quidem de Jove, Junone & Saturno paganicas fabulas potuit ſcire Job barbarus & Edomitanus. *Ibid.*

" duce into the ſcene an hero of his own invention, than to repre-
" ſent the real life and character of that good man;" and had he gone no farther, nor drawn a concluſion ſo foreign to his obſervations, I, for my part, ſee no great harm in what is here advanced, which holds juſt as true ſuppoſing the author to have been a Jew, as he wou'd repreſent it for his having been a pagan.

If the reader has any inclination to be farther acquainted with this author, he may go to Dr. Cave's *Hiſtoria Litteraria*, or to the *General Councils*, where there is a fragment of him the moſt crabbed in its ſtile, and the moſt perplext in its ſentiment, that probably he ever met with[k], and which ſufficiently vindicates the character, Photius gives of him, in this reſpect, that his language was by no means clear, and that both in his ſentiments and arguments he was too much crowded[l]; the caſe was, that, with all his talents, he ſtuck too cloſe to the letter of ſcripture, and in a work, where he ſaw plainly much fiction and invention, he made no allowance for either, but, as the ſame author has obſerv'd of him, he avoided, as he always did, what indeed the vice of thoſe times might elſe have drawn him into, all allegory, and form'd his interpretations according to the letter of the ſtory: ſo that he was for ever repeating the ſame thing, and ſeems to be an ungraceful and an obſcure author[m].

There is ſomething in this remark, which concerns the bulk of the enquirers into this performance more perhaps than we imagine; the literal interpreter is apt to pay too implicit a devotion to the letter, and, in order to avoid the allegory, loſes the meaning: whilſt the allegoriſt, fearful of too ſervile an adherence, is apt to pay little or no regard at all to the letter; both miſtake the matter widely, one abandons the only means of ever coming at the true ſenſe, the other ſacrifices the very end and meaning of the performance its-ſelf. But what has led both jewiſh and chriſtian writers into their reſpective errors

[k] Mihi vero ex totâ libri conſcriptione certus eſt conſcriptor paganicâ ſcientiâ eſſe eruditus. Qui enim apud illos tragœdias componunt, cauſas quidem accipiunt ab his quæ multi loquuntur, quando etiam eas contigerit quodammodo apud plurimos opinionem veritatis habere: purâ autem causâ utentes, ſuam artem & ſapientiam in compoſitione fabularum oſtendere feſtinant, & perſonas introducentes ſibi placitas, & voces circumponentes iis, a quibus clariores fieri arbitrabantur, ut & querimoniam & laudem quæ a ſcriptis infertur, ſive per intellectum, ſive per ipſa verba, ſcriptor peccaverit, non ad perſonas, quarum verba confingit legentes referant, ſed ad fabulæ conſcriptorem. Iſte autem cum inveniſſet de beato Job, &c. *Conc. gen.* Tom. V. p. 451.

[l] Ἐστι δε την μεν φρασιν ὐ παυυ λαμπρος, ταις δε διανοιαις κ᾽ τοις ἐπιχειρημασι λιαν πυκνος. Phot. Bibl. IV. [m] Οὐδε λαμπρος ὐδε σαφης. Φευγων δε τον δυναλον αὐλω τροπον τας ἀλληγοριας, κ᾽ καλα την ἱστοριαν την ἑρμηνειαν ποιουμενος ταυτολογει δε τα πλειστα, κ᾽ ἀχαρις κ᾽ ἀειδης ἐιναι δοκει. Ibid. Bibl. xxxviii.

concerning this book ſeems to me upon the whole, to have been principally one or other of theſe two conſiderations: either that they conceived it to be a real hiſtory, of which the jewiſh annals ſeem'd to furniſh no record, or an allegory, to which they were at a loſs to fix a foundation; the former naturally tempted them to reject all its pretenſions to ſacred ſtory, and put them under the dilemma either of ſuppoſing it of ſome date different from thoſe annals, or of giving it an author that liv'd not at leaſt under that diſpenſation.

Where the latter wou'd lead was plain enough, it open'd of courſe a door to infinite conjecture and refinement, which, to ſpeak the truth, have been indulg'd to the laſt exceſs of whim and wantonneſs on the one hand, and to much learned pedantry and oſtentation on the other; for, not content to look for particular paſſages of antient hiſtory, for any memorable events or any extraordinary perſonages that might be ſhadow'd in it, which was much the moſt obvious curioſity, the learned allegoriſt ſate down to find out ſome peculiar notions and conceits of his own, ſome particular ſects of philoſophers glanc'd at, ſome antient hereſy or other expoſed, or ſome doctrinal points of religion eſtabliſh'd in it; that was the humor that prevail'd amongſt the greateſt part of the writers for ſome time, till at length more ſober ſentiments took place, and the book began once more to be conſider'd as hiſtorical: and even they who could not ſubſcribe to this opinion, becauſe they ſaw that the nature of the compoſition wou'd not admit of it, ſo far at leaſt fell in with it as to ſuppoſe what comes neareſt to the truth, the baſis to be hiſtorical.

A late writer indeed has been pleas'd to revive this long exploded hypotheſis, and thinks there is reaſon to conclude that the extraordinary perſon, whoſe name it bears, muſt bear ſome public character, which, he conceives, conſiſts in this;— "that Job is "ſet forth as a ſort of repreſentative of ADAM, or rather of mankind in general; and that in his private life human nature is "drawn, as it were in miniature; for whoever conſiders the plan of "this ſtory attentively, may ſee therein a lively emblem of the different ſtates of man, and of the various changes and revolutions, "which he has, and ſhall have undergone in this life; the happineſs "of Job's firſt condition, and the uprightneſs of his life well agree "with the ſtate of our firſt parents in paradiſe: Satan's temptation "was common to both; and the deplorable condition to which Job "was reduc'd, in conſequence of Satan's permiſſion to aſſault him, "fitly enough repreſents the miſerable condition of fallen man, ſtript

"of

" of the riches of God's grace, and ſmitten all over with the leproſy " of ſin, which is more noiſome to the ſoul, than the moſt loath- " ſome diſeaſe that can befal it, is to the body. So likewiſe the cure " and reſtoration of Job,—the bleſſing him with a portion of earthly " felicity, double to what he enjoy'd before, and the prolongation " of his life beyond the common extent of the times he liv'd in: all " this ſeems to intimate hopes of the future recovery of human na- " ture to its firſt happy ſtate, in full as great perfection, as our firſt pa- " rents enjoy'd it, if not greater[r]."

The allegory, it muſt be own'd, at firſt ſight, is not unpromiſing, and, had not the learned author beſpoke the reader's attention with ſo much care to the plan of this ſtory, might have paſs'd at leaſt for a harmleſs conceit; but, if he take the account that Moſes has given of the fall of man, I do not ſee how he will be able to reconcile the circumſtances of Job's fall, and much leſs the circumſtances attending his reſtoration, with the fall and the recovery of Adam; for no latitude, that can be indulged to an allegorical compoſition, can juſtify a downright contradiction in eſſentials, hardly indeed a variation in the material circumſtances of the ſtory alluded to; and yet the learned author was ſenſible, it ſeems, himſelf of one circumſtance, and upon his own hypotheſis it is an eſſential one, in which the parallel does not hold, and which therefore he has endeavour'd to palliate, and that is, " that Job preſerv'd his integrity which Adam and " his poſterity did not," a circumſtance which might have ſhewn him the falſity of his allegory.

But there is another, of which he ſeems not quite aware, which concerns the conduct, as the other did the foundation of his alluſion; in Moſes's account of the fall, Adam complied at once, without ſcruple, with the counſel his wife ſuggeſted, which Job did not, but reprov'd her for it: one, the moment he hearken'd to the woman, became naked and miſerable, the other had all his calamities befall him before the woman ſuggeſted her council to him: one, the moment he hearken'd to the woman, fell from all the joys of paradiſe, and was doom'd to death, and, his only inheritance, a land bringing forth thorns and thiſtles, the other, becauſe he hearken'd not to the woman, was rais'd from a filthy dunghill to a rich and fair inheritance, and ſo far from having the ſentence of death pronounc'd upon him for his diſobedience, had an expreſs aſſurance of ſurviving all his calamities: one in ſhort became inſtantly miſerable and mortal, the other happy and proſperous beyond

[r] Worthington's Eſſay, p. 114.

all

all his former happineſs and proſperity. Not that the diſcovery of this reſemblance ſuch as it is, is to be aſcribed to the learned author; St. Chryſoſtom in his diſcourſe upon *the juſt and bleſſed Job*, had hit upon the ſame alluſion, but with all that flow of fancy and language peculiar to him, was too nice a diſtinguiſher to purſue it beyond the bare reſemblance; a ſimilitude no doubt the pious Father ſaw between the two ſtories, and at the ſame time that he obſerv'd their agreement in general, he pointed out the difference between them in particular[f]; but to erect a ſimilitude into an allegory was a ſecret in compoſition reſerv'd for later ages.

But I might perhaps on my own account, have ſpared this ſtricture upon the learned author's eſſay, having ſomething my ſelf to offer in the following ſheets upon the allegorical plan: for that an allegorical performance the book of Job is I have no doubt, tho' I cannot prevail upon my ſelf to fall in with that which is here ſuggeſted: the alluſions it contains to jewiſh hiſtory and antiquity are to me ſo many inconteſtable arguments of ſomething or other of this kind being ſhadow'd under it, that I cannot refrain acquainting the reader, that he is to expect no other account of this matter than what is to be copied from the prophets or the chronicles of that people; from materials ſuch as theſe it is that I hope to give ſome tolerable account of the book before us, and to ſhew that it is not only an allegory, but an allegory founded in the particular circumſtances of that very people, at a period too the moſt intereſting and extraordinary in their whole hiſtory; and ſo without entering at preſent, upon the external evidence of the book, the nature or conduct of the compoſition or any teſtimony of antiquity about it, ſhall endeavour to deduce the buſineſs and the argument, the age and the author of it from its internal evidence, or the plain and obvious contents of the book its-ſelf, reſerving the conſideration of its ſtile and ſtructure for ſome more convenient place.

Now by allegory I do not mean that talent of the poets, of introducing the properties of elements, the faculties of the mind, and the virtues and vices, in forms and perſons, and attributing to them

[f] Τοιυτος ην κ ὁ Ἀδαμ, προ τυ πεισθηναι τη γυναικι. δια τυτο ὑτος ὁ πειθεσθαι τη γυναικι, ἱνα μη γενηται καθ' ἑκεινον. ἑκεινος ἐνδεδυμενος ην ἀφθαρσιαν, ὡς οἰδεν ὁ πλασας ἀυτον. κ ἱνα πεισθη τῆ γυναικι, γυμνος ἐγενετο κ καθεκριθη. ὑτος γυμνος ην κ ὑκ ἐπεισθη τη γυναικι, κ ἱνα μη πεισθη τη γυναικι την των ἀγγελων σεφανηφοριαν ἐνεδυσατο. ἑκεινος ἱνα πεισθη τη γυναικι κ της τυ παραδεισυ τρυφης ἐξεπεσε, κ την γην μητερα ἀκανθων ἐποιησε, κ θανατον ἐκληρονομησεν, ὑτος ἱνα μη πεισθη τη γυναικι κ της κορπιας κ των πληγων την ἐλευθεριαν ἐ ασε, κ των ὑραιων ἐκληρονομησε. Chryſoſt. de juſt. Job. p. 178.

actions and language agreable to them: neither by an allegorical compoſition, do I mean a compoſition abounding with occaſional metaphors and alluſions, for this is common alike to every ſpecies of poetry, but I wou'd be underſtood to mean one and the ſame alluſion conſtantly and uniformly purſued throughout the whole performance, a compoſition, which, to all appearance, exhibits the life and ſtory of one perſon at the ſame time that in fact it is intended to convey the life and ſtory of another, and carries along with it a moral that concerns not immediately the perſon, whoſe name it bears, but more remotely the perſons ſuppoſed to be ſhadow'd under it.

Whether indeed this be the preciſe notion of this ſpecies of poetry among the criticks I am neither certain nor ſolicitous, if it give but the reader an idea of what is the principal deſign of this undertaking; ſome of the earlieſt writers upon this book call it a parable[t], and ſo they might well, conſidering that the ſhare at leaſt which Job bears in it, is expreſsly call'd ſo in the body of the performance its-ſelf[v]; but this idea of it differs but little from that which is here inculcated, and coincides in the main with the allegorical ſolution; thus Nathan reproves David under the parable of a rich man that had killed and taken away the lamb of a poor man[w]: thus the woman of Tekoah, that was hired by Joab to reconcile the ſame prince towards his ſon Abſalom, propoſed to him the parable of her two ſons that fought together in the field, and one of which having kill'd the other, they were going to put the ſurvivor to death, and ſo to deprive her of both her ſons at once[x]. Call theſe by what name you pleaſe, an allegory or a parable, it is the ſame alluſion which runs uniformly thro' each of them, and the moral is addreſs'd not immediately to either the woman of Tekoah, or the rich man, but to thoſe that were ſhadow'd under them.

What has made me the more particular in aſcertaining my meaning in this point is, that the reader might be prepared to meet with ſuch a degree of fiction and invention in the work under enquiry, as is eſſential to an allegorical compoſition: that tho' upon the whole, the author muſt be ſuppos'd to confine himſelf to hiſtoric truth, yet ſo much latitude he muſt of courſe allow him in the ſtructure of the poem, as a work of imagination naturally calls for in order to give it that roundneſs and integrity, which a ſcenic repreſentation, for ſuch an

[t] Nôſti quoſdam eſſe, qui dicunt Jobum nunquam fuiſſe, neque creatum eſſe, ſed hiſtoriam illius nihil aliud eſſe quam parabolam. Maimon. *in Mor. Nev.* c. 22.

[v] Job xxvii. 1. xxix. 1. [w] 2 Sam. xii. 2. [x] Ib. xiv. 2.

one it is at length agreed on all hands to be[y] requires. But if he wou'd ſee this particular accurately and diſtinctly handled, I ſhall refer him to the ingenious author of *the Divine Legation of Moſes demonſtrated*, where I dare promiſe him, he will find much curious matter and dramatic ſkill requiſite to form a true notion of any drama, and abſolutely neceſſary to form any tolerable judgment of this.

Neither is this the only uſe I have to make of this author's learning and ſagacity, to both of which I confeſs my ſelf greatly indebted in what I have to communicate upon this ſubject; the reader will there ſee a collection of references and alluſions both to the jewiſh law and hiſtory[z] ſo happily picked out, ſo judiciouſly unveiled, and ſo dextrouſly applied, that he will want but little farther argument to convince him that at ſome period or other of the Moſaic diſpenſation the book of Job muſt have been compoſed, and that although it preſent not the ſtory of any ſuch perſon as Job, yet the jewiſh annals furniſh records clear and authentic of the hiſtory it preſents, and that therefore there is no neceſſity to have recourſe to any age, country, or religion different from their own, to explain it.

What that period is will be a work of ſome labor to determine; it muſt firſt be ſhewn that there are traces enough of hebrew antiquity in the work its-ſelf, to juſtify any ſuch hypotheſis, that there are footſteps to be found in it of the jewiſh republic throughout its principal ſtages, and that how deep ſoever the alluſions lie, yet at the bottom it is the ſeed of Abraham and the poſterity of Jacob in particular, whoſe ſtory is the foundation of it; for that ſome public character it is which this extraord'nary perſon bears, I agree with Mr. Worthington, "from the extraordinary character given by God of Job; from the ſolemn manner in which he introduces him; and from the ſingular diſtinction he makes between him and other men both in proſperity and adverſity[a]." All theſe marks of diſtinction and partiality concur in fixing this public character to the Iſraelites alone, who manifeſtly experienced God's peculiar care and providence, throughout a continued ſeries of ſo many hundred years, and through ſo many ſucceſſive ſeaſons of diſtreſſes and deliverances.

It ſhou'd ſeem indeed no ſlender preſumption in favor of ſome ſuch hypotheſis as this, that there is little doubt among the beſt

[y] Sherlock Diſſ. ii. p. 268. Div. Leg. Vol. II. Part II. Grey's Lib. Job. præf. and Remarks upon Warburton p. 21. Worthington's Diſſ. on the book of Job, p. 443.
[z] Div. Leg. Vol. II. p. 491, &c. [a] Worthington, Diſſert. p. 413.

writers[b], but that the account here given of the fall of man[c]; of the depravity and corruption introduc'd thereby into the world[d]; of the formation of *the crooked ſerpent*[e]; and of both *the deceiver and the deceived*[f], is plainly the ſame with the Moſaic doctrine; nor is it eaſy to be conceived how the author whoever he was, could have adopted the ſelf ſame philoſophy with regard to both the creation and deſtruction of the old world, if he had not had ſome ſuch records to ground it upon as the Pentateuch; for thus we read of God's *ſtretching out the north over the empty place*; of *his hanging the earth upon nothing*; of *his binding up the waters in the thick clouds*; of *his compaſſing the waters with bounds*; of *his garniſhing the heavens by his ſpirit*[g]; of *his commanding the morning and day-ſpring*[h]; and of *wicked men cut down out of time, and whoſe foundations were overflow'd with a flood*[i]. Theſe are all of them, expreſſions that need no comment to one vers'd in Moſaic philoſophy, and ſpeak in truth the very language, as they breathe the very ſpirit of that ſacred hiſtorian.

Still it muſt be own'd, all this but proves the high antiquity of this book, and if no alluſions can be produc'd from it to any events lower than the flood, the preſumption lies on the ſide of the learned advocates for either Moſes himſelf being the author, or ſome patriarch as old at leaſt as Moſes; and, tho' I be far from thinking that argument of Doctor Burnet's concluſive, that Job muſt have been older than Moſes becauſe he makes no mention of the tranſactions in the wilderneſs; for the ſame would hold againſt an obſervation of his own, that Plato makes no mention of the flood, and ſtill he goes about to prove that at the ſame time he was no ſtranger to it[k]; yet I freely acknowledge that if as he aſſerts[l], there be no mention made of any tranſactions in Egypt, or in the wilderneſs, the application of this ſtory to the Iſraelites is premature and unwarrantable, conſidering how large and particular the whole performance is in celebrating God's power and glory, which in no inſtance that

[b] Sherlock, Diſſ. II. p. 238. [c] Ch. xx. 4—8. [d] Ch. xv. 14. xxv. 4.
[e] Ch xxvi. 13. [f] Ch. xii. 16. [g] Ch. xxvi. 7, 10. after which Job adds, the pillars of heaven tremble and are aſtoniſh'd at his reproof, ℣. 11. upon which Lud. de Dieu has this comment, Refert hæc ad primum & ſecundum diem creationis: commoti & concuſſi huc illuc fuere cœli, primo die quia erant humidi & fluentis inſtar aquæ, at ſecundo die obſtupuerunt, increpante & dicente Deo fiat firmamentum, tum conſtiterunt & ſolidi facti ſunt, inſtar viri, qui territus & increpitus conſiſtit. *De Dieu in loc.* [h] Ch. xxxviii. 12
[i] Ch. xxii. 15, 16. [k] Burnet *Arch. Phil.* p. 314. [l] Quod nullibi meminerit rerum a Moſe geſtarum, ſive in Ægypto, ſive in exitu, ſive in deſerto, licet multus ſit frequenſque in celebrandâ Dei magnitudine; cum tamen nulla fuerit hiſtoria, poſt diluvium, unde ſupremi numinis, juſti & potentis, gloria aptius illuſtrari potuiſſet, quam ab illô Ægyptiacâ. Burnet *Arch. Philoſ.* p. 343, & p. 265.

concern'd

concern'd that people cou'd have been more happily made uſe of to the author's purpoſe, ſuppoſing the Iſraelites to have any ſhare in it, than in this one of the deliverance of them from the Egyptian bondage.

How that matter therefore ſtands will be worth while to conſider, before we make any farther advances in a ſolution, which profeſſes to maintain that the Iſraelites are at the bottom of this allegory, and that the ſucceſſive ſtages of their republic are to be traced out in the conduct of it. And here full to our point, preſents its ſelf an alluſion to that memorable event, their paſſage through the red ſea. *Behold he ſhutteth up the waters and they dry up, alſo he ſendeth them out and they overturn the earth*[l]. Moſes's account of this matter is, that *the children of Iſrael walked upon dry land thro' the midſt of the ſea*, and that upon the Egyptians purſuing them, *the ſea returned to its ſtrength, and the Lord overthrew them in the midſt of the ſea*[m].

Again we read, *he divideth the ſea with his power, and by his underſtanding he ſmiteth through the proud*[n]. The former part needs no explanation, or if it ſhou'd be thought to do ſo, will be beſt explain'd by the parallel expreſſion in the pſalms[o]; the latter is attended with ſome little difficulty, which however by comparing it with a like paſſage in Iſaiah, admits of a very clear ſolution; for the word in the original which is here tranſlated *proud*, is RAHAB, the ſame with that which occurs in the prophet: *Art thou not it which*, ſpeaking of *the arm of the Lord, cut* RAHAB, *and wounded the dragon, art thou not it which dried up the ſea, the waters of the great depth, that hath made the ſea a way for the ranſom'd to paſs over*[p]? And a little lower, *I am the Lord that divided the ſea, whoſe waves roar'd*[q]. That it is the ſame miracle which both theſe paſſages allude to there can be little queſtion, and commentators have obſerv'd therefore upon the word RAHAB, that it ſhou'd be tranſlated EGYPT[r], and ſo indeed we find it tranſlated in the pſalms, where the ſame event is ſpoken of, *thou ruleſt the raging of the ſea, thou ſtilleſt the waves thereof when they ariſe, thou haſt ſubdued* RAHAB, *Egypt, and deſtroyed it*[s]; in all which places it is evident that the deſtruction of Pharaoh and his hoſt in the red ſea is plainly referr'd to.

So capital an alluſion as this, to one of the moſt extraordinary incidents in the whole hiſtory of the Iſraelites, may ſerve to ſhew how

[l] Ch. xii. 15. [m] Exod. xiv. 26, &c. [n] Ch. xxvi. 12. Vi ſuâ ſcidit mare erythræum ut Hebræi tranſirent. *Grot.* [o] Pſ. lxxiv. 13. cxxxvi. 13. [p] Iſa. li. 10. [q] Ib. 15. [r] Clarius in Pſ. lxxxix. 10. Lowth. *on* Iſa. li. 15. [s] Pſ. lxxxix. 10.

raſh

raſh at leaſt the learned author was in taking for granted that no ſuch alluſion could be found in the book of Job, and at the ſame time that it wou'd warrant the application of two very promiſing texts [t] to the Egyptian darkneſs, it ſaves us the neceſſity of laying the whole ſtreſs upon them to ſupport the reſemblance. Nor is this the only place where God's deliverance of his people from the Egyptian bondage is glanced at; their paſſage through the wilderneſs is ſo directly parodied both from the pſalmiſt and from the ſacred hiſtorian, that whoever reads of God's *taking away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and cauſing them to wander in a wilderneſs where there is no way, and to grope in the dark without light* [v], will be at no loſs to find out the perſons ſo highly pictur'd in the pſalms, who *went aſtray in the wilderneſs and found no city to dwell in; hungry and thirſty their ſouls fainted in them; ſo he brought them out of darkneſs and the ſhadow of death* [w].

Whither it was that they were bound in this miraculous expedition of theirs, Moſes told them, to the land of Canaan, *a land flowing with milk and honey*, and to this very land Zophar ſpeaking of the particular privileges to which the wicked ſhou'd not be admitted refers, and ſays *that he ſhall not ſee the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter* [x]. Nay the very expulſion of the Canaanites to make room for them, and the extermination of the nations whoſe territories the Lord had devoted to them, and the kings and princes whom they defeated and took priſoners in their way, are all of them ſo minutely hinted at, that there is ſcarce any avoiding the application; thus Elihu, expoſtulating with Job for his charging God's government with partiality, tells him plainly *he ſhall break in pieces mighty men without number*, alluding no doubt to the Canaanitiſh nations, *and ſhall ſet others in their ſtead.* And again extolling God's great ſtrength and wiſdom in the diſpoſal of the kings and kingdoms of this world Job obſerves, that *he looſeth the bonds of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle; he poureth contempt upon princes, and weakeneth the ſtrength of the mighty; he increaſeth the nations and deſtroyeth them, he enlargeth the nations and ſtraitneth them again* [y]; the nations are here diſtinguiſh'd from *the chief of the people of the earth*; theſe we ſee, are devoted to *wander in the wilderneſs*, thoſe to *ſtraitning and deſtruction.*

[t] *From the wicked their light is with-holden*, ch. xxxviii. 15. *he commandeth the ſun, and it riſeth not, and ſealeth up the ſtars*, ch. ix. 7.
[v] Ch. xii. 24.
[w] Pſ. cvii. 4.
[x] Ch. xx. 17.
[y] Ch. xxxiv. 24. xii. 19.

Alluſions

Alluſions ſuch as theſe it was that induc'd a learned interpreter to conclude, that the author of this book muſt have liv'd a long time after Moſes from this particular circumſtance, that the bringing of the children of Iſrael into Canaan is a thing ſpoken of as long ſince done: the paſſage indeed, which he remarks upon, is a very ſingular one, and as it is introduc'd with more than ord'nary ſolemnity will require more than ord'nary attention. *I will ſhew thee*, ſays Eliphaz, *hear me, and that which I have ſeen I will declare; which wiſe men have told from their fathers, and have not hid it, unto whom alone the earth was given, and no ſtranger paſſed among them* [z]. The learned interpreter makes no doubt but that it is the introduction of the Iſraelites into Canaan [a], which is the ſubject of this addreſs, and the Chaldee Paraphraſt renders the *wiſe men* there ſpoken of, by the tribe of Jacob [b]; nor indeed do the particular circumſtances of any other people under the ſun admit of the application of ſo ſingular a diſtinction; for to theſe alone was that country given, and ſuch was the care of providence in ſecuring it to them againſt all communication with their idolatrous neighbours, that *not a ſtranger paſs'd among them*; and although it was expreſsly provided by their law that *three times in the year ſhou'd all their males appear before the Lord in Jeruſalem* [c], yet it is very remarkable that in all theſe journies their country ſuffer'd neither from the incurſions nor the invaſions of its borderers.

But if they were thus miraculouſly fortified againſt the arms of their neighbours, they were by no means proof againſt their idolatry: a ſtrong paſſion for this they brought along with them out of Egypt, and early as their coming into the wilderneſs of Sinai, we may obſerve it breaking out among them, and the golden calf [d] worſhipp'd with all the expreſſions of joy and devotion. It has been generally ſuppoſed I know, that to any ſpecies of idolatry practis'd among the Iſraelites, there is not the moſt diſtant alluſion in this whole book, but I will venture to point out one, and that I conceive, a very glaring and obvious one too; and it is, where Job ſolemnly diſavows, amongſt many other impieties, any corruption of this particular na-

[z] Ch. xv. 17. [a] Vixiſſe quidem multo tempore poſt Moſem videtur quia, tanquam de re olim factâ, videtur fieri mentio Iſraelitarum adductorum in Canaan. Caſtal. *in loc.*

[b] Quod tribûs Jacobi ſapientes reſponderunt, nec celarunt quicquam eorum quos docuerunt eos patres eorum. Chald. *Par. in loc.*

[c] Exod. xxiii. 17. [d] Ib. ii. 8.

ture,

ture, if *I have made gold my hope, or have ſaid unto the fine gold thou art my confidence*[e].

Commentators indeed have interpreted this as they have done other paſſages, too literally, and becauſe they ſaw him diſclaiming any confidence that might be objected to him in his riches, conceiv'd of courſe that avarice and nothing more cou'd be imported by thoſe expreſſions; whereas the words themſelves plainly ſhew that ſomething more is to be concluded from them; for *thou art my confidence* is the very addreſs and language as it is too the very principle of all idolatrous devotion, and in the next verſe but one, he farther diſclaims a piece of idolatry of another kind, *if I beheld the ſun when it ſhined, or the moon walking in brightneſs, and my heart hath been ſecretly enticed, or my mouth hath kiſſed my hand.* He puts we ſee, the two crimes both upon the ſame footing, *for this* ALSO, *i. e.* as well as the other, *were an iniquity to be puniſh'd by the judge*, and the ſame reaſon is aſſign'd for both, and which indeed is the common condition of every ſpecies of idolatry, *I ſhou'd have denied the God that is above*[f]. Whether there be not an alluſion here to that worſhip of *the Queen of heaven*, which the prophet charges upon the abandon'd Jews[g], the learned reader wou'd do well to conſider; the particular ceremonial indeed of *kiſſing the hand*[h] might be a ceremonial not in uſe among them, but in a compoſition where there is ſuch a mixture of heathen and jewiſh rites, the worſhip its-ſelf is foundation ſufficient to ground the conjecture upon.

But I have not yet done with the journeying of the Iſraelites through the wilderneſs, for if I miſtake not greatly, this is the very key to the whole performance; and that full to our purpoſe, we have a deſcription of Job in all his glory, ſtrange and unaccountable in every other view of it, and beautiful beyond all expreſſion, if we conſider it in this. And indeed all prejudice apart, one wou'd have naturally been led to think that the moſt probable proſpect of ſucceeding in an enquiry after a character ſo very extraord'nary as that which this work preſents, wou'd have been to have gone directly to any anecdotes he might have dropt of himſelf: or that in the courſe of ſo long and ſo peeviſh a debate between him and his three friends, ſome memorable fact muſt have eſcaped one or other of them that wou'd lead of courſe to a diſcovery; thus an enquirer into the life and character of old Evander wou'd have thought it a

[e] Ch. xxxi. 24. [f] Ver. 26. [g] Jer. vii. 18. [h] Ἀνασπᾶσθε δὲ προσκυνοῦσι τὸν ἥλιον ὅκ ὡς ἡμεῖς, τὴν χεῖρα κυσπᾶσθε. Lucian. περὶ ὀρχήσεως, p. 459.

very fortunate ſetting out to have hit upon ſo curious a circumſtance as that which he has let fall of himſelf.

> *O mihi præteritos referat ſi Jupiter annos,*
> *Qualis eram, quum primum aciem Præneſte ſub ipſâ*
> *Stravi, ſcutorumque accendi victor acervos*[i].
>
> O wou'd kind heaven my ſtrength and youth recal,
> Such as I was beneath Præneſte's wall;
> Then when I made the foremoſt foes retire,
> And ſet whole heaps of conquer'd ſhields on fire!

And yet a circumſtance much like this, introduc'd in the very ſame manner, and full as ſpirited and warlike in the ſentiment of it, does Job relate, which if cloſely attended to, will give all the light we want into his ſtory: and which had it been earlier attended to, had ſaved the world all the deep reſearches of many a learned commentator, as well as all the whimſical reveries of Rabbins and Cabbaliſts.

The deſcription I refer to, is to be ſeen at large in the xxixth chapter, where Job breaks out into that pathetic exclamation. *O that I were as in months paſt, as in the days when God preſerv'd me; when his candle ſhined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkneſs; as I was in the days of my youth, when the ſecret of God was upon my tabernacle; when the Almighty was yet with me; when my children were about me; when I waſh'd my ſteps with butter, and the rock pour'd me out rivers of oil.* Where the ſcene of all this action was laid he muſt have been a very inattentive obſerver of what paſs'd in the wilderneſs not to diſtinguiſh, where the pillar of the cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night conducted the Iſraelites; what think we, were thoſe *months paſt*, but *the very days of old, and the years of many generations*, mention'd by Moſes, *when the moſt high divided the nations their inheritance; when he ſeparated the ſons of Adam; when the Lord alone did lead Jacob through the waſte howling wilderneſs, and made him ride on the high places of the earth; when he made him ſuck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock, butter of kine and milk of ſheep*[k]. The likeneſs was here ſo ſtriking that the very learned Dr. Grey, at the ſame time that he pro-

[i] Virg. Æn. viii. 562.

[k] Deut. xxxii.

feſſes

feſſes to ſee neither allegory nor alluſion throughout the whole book, has ventur'd to point out this very hymn of Moſes's, in his notes upon this paſſage[l], and has elſewhere fixt upon Moſes himſelf for the author of this book becauſe of the exact reſemblance of theſe two places[m].

And yet is this but a ſingle ſketch of the author's talents in parodying this celebrated ſtory, and if I treſpaſs upon the reader's patience, I ſhall hope for his pardon in tranſcribing the remainder of this chapter, ſince I am perſuaded that a full view of it muſt preſent to him that miraculous expedition of the Iſraelites in full majeſty, and revive the traces of thoſe happy times, when the motions of their generals and their armies were regulated by the immediate direction of God, who dwelt among his people all the while as a king in the midſt of his camp.

This very ſtate and majeſty it is which is ſo highly touch'd in the following deſcription; *When I went out to the gate thro' the city, when I prepared my ſeat in the ſtreet, the young men ſaw me and hid themſelves, and the aged aroſe and ſtood up. The princes refrain'd talking and laid their hands on their mouth, the nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth. When the ear heard me, it bleſſed me, and when the eye ſaw me, it gave witneſs to me: becauſe I deliver'd the poor that cried, and the fatherleſs and him that had none to help him; the bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh came upon me, and I cauſed the widow's heart to ſing for joy. I put on righteouſneſs and it clothed me, my judgment was a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame, I was a father to the poor, and the cauſe, which I knew not, ſearched I out; and I brake the jaws of the wicked, and pluck'd the ſpoil out of his teeth. Then I ſaid I ſhall multiply my days as the ſand, I ſhall die in my neſt. My rock was ſpread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch, my glory was freſh in me, and my bow was renew'd in my hand. Unto me men gave ear, and waited and kept ſilence at my counſel, after my words they ſpake not again, and my ſpeech dropped upon them, and they waited for me as for the rain, and they open'd their mouth wide as for the latter rain; if I laughed on them they believed it not, and the light of my countenance they caſt not down.* Then follows the clew to the whole deſcription, I CHOSE OUT THEIR WAY AND SATE CHIEF, AND DWELT AS A KING IN THE ARMY.

[l] Grey Lib. Job. ch. xxix. 6. *Notes.*

[m] Præf. ad Lib. Job. and anſwer to Warb. p. 28.

The

The majeſty of ſome eaſtern monarch, a Cyrus or an Alexander, rever'd as they were, like deities, by their ſubjects, and adored by their vaſſals, could not have been painted in higher colors: all the virtues and graces as well as all the ſtate and grandeur of a crown are here minutely deſcribed, and thoſe moſt precious jewels of any diadem, judgment, mercy and beneficence appear in full luſtre; but perfection ſuch as this, is not the condition of earthly majeſty, and in vain therefore ſhall we look for it there: it is the peculiar attribute of divinity, and is to be found only in *the King of kings*, and who elſe could either have concerted or accompliſh'd ſo marvellous a deliverance? who could have conducted an army ſo numerous, embarraſs'd as it was, with ſo many flocks and herds, beſides women and children, haraſs'd by all the jealouſy and all the force too of the Amalekites, the Edomites, the Moabites and Amorites, and what was ſtill more threatening, by its own continual mutiny and murmurs, but the Lord of hoſts himſelf? he it was that projected this miraculous expedition, and gave the conduct of it to his ſervant Moſes.

Take but the deſcription here in Job in this light, and there will be little difficulty in aſcertaining the alluſion; for the marches and incampments of the Iſraelites in the wilderneſs, the ſituation of the tents of each particular tribe, and above all, the ſituation of *the tabernacle of the covenant* will ſoon let us into this ſecret, we ſhall by the help of ſuch materials as theſe, ſoon be enabled to diſcover who it was *that choſe out their way* during the whole progreſs, and learn with certainty that it was no leſs a commander, than God himſelf that *ſate chief and dwelt as a King in the army.*

In the midſt of this camp ſtood the *tabernacle of the covenant* pitch'd in the centre of the twelve tribes, the prætorium of *the Lord of hoſts*; for thus the Lord inſtructed Moſes. *I will ſet my tabernacle in the midſt of you, and my ſoul ſhall not abhor you, and I will walk in the midſt of you, and ye ſhall be my people, and I will be your God*[n]. The twelve tribes, in all their incampments pitch'd round about the tabernacle, every one according to his own order: to the eaſt were Judah, Zebulun, and Iſſachar; to the weſt were Ephraim, Manaſſeh and Benjamin; to the ſouth Reuben, Gad and Simeon; and to the north Dan, Aſher and Nephthali; the ſame order was obſerv'd in all their marches and decampments: the twelve tribes were divided into four great ſquadrons, each compoſed of their three

[n] Lev. xxvi. 11.

tribes, and at the head of them march'd the *ark of the covenant of the Lord to ſearch out a reſting-place for them* [n].

At the front of the tabernacle were the ſeats of judgment, there it was that all judicial proceedings were carried on, and the judges *ſate in the gate* to adminiſter juſtice, to hear complaints, and decide controverſies; this was the diſpoſition conſtantly obſerved in all the hebrew encampments, for ſtrength and ſecurity inferior to none, and for order and beauty a pattern to all; the famous compliment which Pyrrhus is ſaid to have paid the Roman camps, that theſe cou'd not be the camps of barbarians, fell far ſhort therefore of that eulogy which Balaam beſtow'd upon the camp of Iſrael; *how goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! and thy tabernacles, O Iſrael, as the vallies are they ſpread forth, and as gardens by the river's ſide* [o].

From this view of the Iſraelitiſh incampments we cannot well fail to form a judgment of the beauty and propriety of this alluſion, and ſhould any doubt remain concerning the princes and the nobles, that are ſaid to have paid all that reverence and profound regard, we may learn from the book of *Numbers* who they were; *they were the renowned of the congregation, princes of the tribes of their fathers, heads of thouſands in Iſrael and that were over them that were number'd* [p]; for as a learned author has obſerv'd, "from the time of the diſtri-
" bution of the Iſraelites into tribes, they are reckon'd all along as
" ſo many diſtinct nations, independent of each other, and ſubſiſt-
" ing under rulers and judges of their own [q]."

'Tis upon this very ſituation of their camp with the *tabernacle of the covenant* in the centre of it, that Job himſelf ſuggeſts that fine piece of raillery, which he puts into the mouths of his three friends. *Behold I know your thoughts and the devices you wrongfully imagine againſt me, for you ſay, where is the houſe of the prince, and where is the tent of the tabernacles of the wicked? have ye not aſked them that go by the way, and do you not know their tokens* [r]? A keener ſtroke cou'd not have been levell'd at Job, nor an irony more refined at the ſumptuouſneſs and magnificence of the ſacred prætorium; and had the learned editor of this book beſtow'd the ſame comment upon this paſſage, which he has ſo judiciouſly ſubjoin'd to a ſubſequent one [s], it might have been ſeen in its true light, and both the impe-

[n] Numb. x. 32. [o] Numb. xxiv. 6. [p] Numb. i. 16. [q] Sherlock *Diſc.* p. 301.
[r] Ch. xxi. 27. [s] Tabernaculum habitaculorum, i. e. ampliſſima tabernacula. Vatabl. Ubi Domus viri illius ingenui liberalis! &c. Grey ad loc.
[s] Tendam meum tabernaculum ut *Auguſtale*, ſupra popularium meorum tentoria. Majeſtate quandam ſacroſanctâ eminebit. Grey on ch. xxix. 25. *notes.*

rial

rial tent and the divine majeſty preſiding in it been diſtinguiſh'd through all its obſcurity.

Whether indeed by an alluſion he has here ſuggeſted, to the old tokens of the high-ways[t], he wou'd be underſtood to mean the indexes to the ways that led thro' the camps of the antients, I know not: but I ſuſpect I own, that ſome ſuch meaning muſt be at the bottom of this text; and Le Clerc in his remark upon this place, has inſinuated a ſenſe like this, and upon a little deeper ſearch into it, I believe it will be found to be the true one, tho' in ſuch a penury of eaſtern records as he ſo much laments[v], he was not able to go through with it.

The tokens mention'd in this paſſage, in the original are term'd OTOT, and what theſe were we may learn too from the book of *Numbers* plainly enough, without either recourſe to foreign records or any ſtrain'd interpretations; *Every man*, ſays Moſes, *of the children of Iſrael ſhall pitch by his own* DIGLU, *ſtandard, with the* OTOT *enſigns of his father's houſe, far off about the tabernacle of the congregation ſhall they pitch*[w]. The enſigns are here we ſee, plainly diſtinguiſh'd from the ſtandards, and the caſe was this, that beſides the imperial ſtandard at the head of the prætorium, which was here indeed no other than the cloud or the pillar of fire, the four quarters of the camp had each its peculiar banner, and each tribe again its peculiar enſign; without ſome ſuch ſymbol it had been impoſſible either to preſerve the order and uniformity of a camp, or to regulate its marches and motions, much leſs had it been practicable, in an army conſiſting of little leſs than three millions, including all their dependants, for each man to find out even the tribe he belong'd to, and much leſs ſtill the tent of his own particular houſhold.

Of what kind indeed theſe enſigns were, and what their devices, we have little light from ſcripture to inform us, though this is a defect abundantly ſupplied by the Rabbins, were their authority of weight enough to decide ſo intereſting a queſtion; there is light enough however for us to diſtinguiſh that theſe, whatever they were, are the enſigns alluded to in this paſſage, and by the help of this interpretation we may come at the true ſpirit of this piece of irony, which amounts in ſhort to this, "what is now become of that magnifi-

[t] Alluſum hic ad ſigna viarum. Grey in loc. [v] *Hotboth* vocantur ſigna quædam, ex quibus iter per ea loca facientes ſolebant dignoſcere dominos ædificiorum vel tentoriorum. Ea vero ſigna qualia eſſent, in tantâ orientis monumentorum penuriâ nemo dixerit. Cler. in loc. [w] Numb. ii. 2.

" cent prætorium, where thou ſateſt as a king in the army? aſk of " thoſe if you can find them, that are vers'd in the ſtreets and high- " ways of the camp, and learn of them the particular enſigns!" The ſecret was, that this tent of his was now no more; God as he complains, *had looſed his cord*, or as the parallel text in the prophet will beſt explain it, *his tabernacle was ſpoiled, and his cords broken, there were none to ſtretch forth his tent any more, or to ſet up his curtains*[w].

And conſiſtent with this deſcription of the hebrew camp here in Job, is that celebrated pſalm, where the Iſraelitiſh common-wealth particularly whilſt in the wilderneſs, is ſo beautifully deſcribed. *O God, when thou wenteſt forth before the people, when thou wenteſt through the wilderneſs, the earth ſhook, and the heavens dropped at the preſence of God, even as Sinai alſo was moved at the preſence of God, who is the God of Iſrael; thou, O God, ſenteſt a gracious rain upon thy inheritance, and refreſhedſt it when it was weary; thy congregation ſhall dwell therein*[x]. The truly learned Mr. Mede has obſerv'd upon theſe laſt words that, HAIAH, here render'd *congregation*, were more properly render'd *living creatures*, and ſo indeed the LXX and St. Jerom have both tranſlated it; and the meaning then will be, that thoſe living creatures, which the enſigns of the camp of Iſrael bore pourtray'd upon them, dwelt in the camp the then only inheritance of that people; and what he thinks, makes this ſuppoſition ſtill more probable is, that the pſalm its ſelf ſets out with the very form of prayer which Moſes made uſe of in the marches of the Iſraelites, *Let God ariſe, and let his enemies be ſcatter'd*[y].

How that matter ſtands I take not upon me to determine, but that the marches of the Iſraelites during that famous period, are here drawn in much the ſame colors with the picture that Job has given of them, is all I contend for; thus a little lower, *it is well ſeen O God how thou goeſt, how thou my God and king goeſt in the ſanctuary*; and leſt we ſhou'd be at a loſs to know his retinue in this triumphant expedition, we are told of part of it, *there is little*

[w] Ch. xxx. 11. Numb. xxxi. 11. [x] Pſ. lxviii. 7. [y] De 4 animalibus totidem Iſraelis cohortum inſignibus quidam accipiunt Pſ. lxviii. 10. Quæ quidem Hieronymus, in verſione illâ, quæ ab Hebraicâ veritate nomen habet, ita tranſtulit, *animalia tua* habitaverunt in hæreditate tuâ, i. e. caſtris Iſraelitici tui populi, quem per eremum deduxiſti, & ſane de illo tempore hic agi patet ex ℣. 7, 8, 9. ne dicam ex ℣. 1. qua mutuatur ex eâ formulâ precationis quâ Moſes in profectione caſtrorum Iſraelis uſus fuerat. Mede *Com. Apoc.* p. 437. *Compare* Ezek. i. 10.

Benjamin

Benjamin their ruler, the princes of Judah their council, and the princes of Nephthali.

If we now reflect a while upon the natural loftineſs and grandeur of the eaſtern ſtile, and how elegant and majeſtic it is when it once ſwells into numbers and poetry, we ſhall readily account for all that majeſty of thoſe deſcriptions which has miſled the ſeveral enquirers into this performance; for having ſet out in ſo wide an ocean, without either chart or compaſs to direct them, or, what was ſtill worſe with that πρωτον ψευδος of the bulk of them, that no hebrew rite or cuſtom, civil, military, or religious was to be found in it, a miſtake much the moſt obvious it was to ſit down with the literal ſenſe of the words, and becauſe they ſaw much of the regal ſtate and ſplendor in ſeveral parts of it, the ſolution that bid faireſt for the true one, was that Job muſt have been a king: yet where to fix his dominions, what people or what country he govern'd, what were the particular manners, religion, laws or policy of his kingdom, were points which afforded infinite matter of ſpeculation, and which therefore they have left in the ſame obſcurity they found them.

Thus Job ſpeaks of *ſleeping with kings and counſellors which built deſolate places for themſelves*[z], where he alludes probably to the ſepulchre of the kings of Iſrael; thus he bewails himſelf, that God *had ſtript him of his glory, and taken his crown from off his head*[a]: and in another place, *O that mine enemy had wrote a book againſt me, I wou'd take it upon my ſhoulder, and bind it as a crown unto me; I wou'd declare unto him the number of my ſteps, as a prince wou'd I go unto him*[b]. The likeneſs was here ſo viſible to the antient manner among the arabian princes, of hanging their ſwords from their ſhoulders, that a learned commentator cou'd not help concluding that it muſt be an alluſion to ſome or other of the arabian kings that was meant in ſuch like paſſages[c]; but neither the crown nor ſword nor yet this manner of hanging it were peculiar to the Arabians, for the Perſians did the ſame, and ſo probably did all the eaſtern nations[d].

And this community of cuſtoms it is, that has had ſo large a ſhare all along in keeping the true intent and meaning of this book out of view; for hard it was for the reader to diſtinguiſh where the jewiſh ceremonial was predominant over the heathen: in many inſtances

[z] Ch. iii. 14. [a] Ch. xix. 9. [b] Ch. xxxi. 36. [c] Alludi videtur ad ritum priſcum ex numeris ſuſpendendi gladium, præcipua autem principatûs inſignia, inter Arabes, enſis & corona. Huic ſuſpicioni faveat ſequentia. Grey in loc.

[d] Univ. Hiſt. V. II. p. 63.

it muſt be own'd, the latter ſeem'd to predominate, and ſo near a balance has the author obſerv'd, that in moſt they are well nigh equal; ſtill in all the greater lines, there is ſome maſterly ſtroke or other, ſome capital difference and diſtinction to aſcertain its grand intention, and if we do but attend to it, the very point we have been now ſo long inſiſting upon, will evince to us the truth of this obſervation; for it is pretty well agreed amongſt the writers upon the camps of the antients, that thoſe of the heathen world differ'd but little in the form and diſpoſition of them, from the hebrew ones, and what is moſt directly to our point, that the ſituation of the prætorium or the general's tent was always in the middle of them: that this of courſe, was extremely magnificent, and the reſort of all the inferior commanders, as well as the ſcene of all public bus'neſs.

There is a deſcription of all this magnificence in Schelius's prolegomena to a treatiſe of Polybius's upon this ſubject, which ſets this matter in its true light, which I ſhall beg leave to lay before the reader. " There are ſays the learned author, four gates to theſe camps, and four great roads cut through the middle of them; in the midſt of theſe ſits the general, not very diſtant from any part, in a ſituation at the ſame time that it is the moſt ſecure, form'd as it were by nature for the ſupreme command; there he ſits in the midſt of the altars, the ſanctuaries, the places and images for divine worſhip, as in a temple of the moſt ſacred religion, where both the ſolemnity of the place its-ſelf, and the deities ſtanding all about him ſurround him with their awfulneſs and majeſty, and put him at the ſame time in remembrance in every exploit, not to have ſo much regard to men as to the gods. Next to theſe are the ſeats of juſtice in the camp; here it is that the commands are diſpens'd, here are the public poſts diſtributed, and buſineſs of the greateſt conſequence tranſacted in ſight both of the gods and of the general. Here are the camp-maſters, the colonels, the captains of the chief troops, the council-board of the general, and the war office [c]."

Allowing for the great diſparity between the eaſtern and the weſtern phraſe, a deſcription more like that which Job has given of his own ſituation *when he ſate chief as a king in the army*, cou'd not well be drawn; and had the obſervation been confin'd to either the form of the camp, or the magnificence of the imperial tent, little it muſt be confeſs'd, was to be concluded from either in favor of the

[c] Schelii Proleg. in Polyb. de re militari Rom.

alluſion

alluſion we have ſuggeſted, becauſe grand and ſumptuous as the tabernacle of the covenant was[f], it is probable that in this reſpect the luxury of ſucceeding ages would as it did, more than equal it; but it is the ſimplicity of the hebrew camp amidſt all it's magnificence, that we are to admire in this deſcription of Job's; we hear not a word in that, of any revellings or debauch; of no goblets or vaſes of the richeſt metals and workmanſhip, no minſtrels or women to adminiſter to luſt, nor any other incentives to either paſſion or expence; on the contrary all is innocence and gravity: there is a ſtate preſerved conſiſtent with decency, at the ſame time that it ſwells with majeſty, and the remarkable benevolence that runs through the whole demeanor of the general, meets with the juſt returns of reſpect and reverence from all his dependants.

But to ſpeak the truth, it is the SHEKINAH, that very ſoul and centre of the Moſaic ſyſtem, which above all, diſtinguiſhes theſe camps, and ſhews that they could be no other than the camps of the Iſraelites in their journeyings through the wilderneſs; then it was that their theocracy was in full vigor and all its glory, and the divine preſence abode in the ſhape of a cloud, upon the covering of the ark, throughout all their tedious wanderings; from hence it paſſed into the ſanctuary of Solomon's temple, and removed not from thence till the time of the Babyloniſh captivity, juſt about the deſtruction of that temple[g], the very inſtant if I miſtake not, that this *candle of the Lord* upon Job's head was taken from him, and *the ſecret of God upon his tabernacle* diſappeared.

And to this SHEKINAH a learned author has taken the pains to point out a competent number of alluſions in the book under examination, to which I ſhall juſt refer the reader, and only copy from him an obſervation curious and pertinent to our purpoſe, where in order to confute the opinion of its being older than Moſes, the words ſays he, of Moſes to the people of Iſrael are, *Aſk now of the days that are paſt, which were before thee, ſince God created man upon earth, and aſk from the one ſide of the heaven even unto the other, whether there has been any ſuch great thing, as this is, or hath been heard like it? Did ever people hear the voice of God ſpeaking out of the midſt of the fire and live*[h]? "If Moſes had

[f] Lege Moſaicâ inſtitutum eſt, ut Tabernaculum ad quæſitiſſimæ formæ & ſplendoris magnificentiſſimi typos & ideas componeretur, ut domus cujuſdam regiæ characterem gereret, & omnia in eo Dei muneri & dignitati regiæ conveniret. Spenſ *de leg. Heb.* p. 246.

[g] Lowth's *Com. on* Ezek. xi. 23. [h] Deut. iv. 34, 35.

ever heard the hiſtory of Job, he cou'd never have ſaid this; on the other hand neither he, nor any of his companions do expreſs any ſuch extreme wonder at God's thus ſpeaking to them, as if it were ſome perfectly new thing and before unheard of, for they were probably proſelytes of the gate[i]."

How probable that conjecture may be I ſhall not at preſent diſpute, as it is not the buſineſs of this ſection to enter upon that point: all I have been contending for thus far is, what by this time I wou'd flatter my ſelf has been ſufficiently proved, that the author of the book of Job was no *alien to the common wealth of Iſrael*; and if what has been ſaid in ſupport of this poſition, ſhou'd not be thought to come up to ſo full a proof as the reader wou'd expect, of what was at firſt ſuggeſted that there are foot-ſteps to be found here of the principal ſtages of that republic, he muſt be content to wait the turning out of a great variety of incidents in the courſe of this inquiry, which I hope, will at length ſatisfy the moſt ſanguine of his expectations. In the mean time to gratify his curioſity, I ſhall venture to anticipate my ſubject ſo far as to preſent him with two or three pictures out of this collection capital and authentic, copied out of the regal part of the jewiſh conſtitution; where he will ſurvey the temple of Solomon riſing once more from its venerable ruins, with all *the gold of Ophir* about it, and one of their beſt princes with one of the very worſt of them, drawn to the exacteſt likeneſs.

Thus Eliphaz ſolliciting Job to repentance, addreſſes him with an inſinuation that badly as things went with him, they might one day go better provided he would but *acquaint himſelf with God*; *If thou return to the Almighty, thou ſhalt be built up, thou ſhalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles*; *then ſhalt thou lay up gold as duſt, and the gold of Ophir as the ſtones of the brooks*; *yea the Almighty ſhall be thy defence, and thou ſhalt have plenty of ſilver: for then ſhalt thou have delight in the Almighty, and ſhalt lift up thy face unto God*; *thou ſhalt make thy prayer unto God, and he ſhall hear thee and thou ſhalt pay thy vows*[k]. Upon this paſſage I ſhall make at preſent no farther remark than this, that the *lifting up his face*, the *paying his vows*, and *making his prayer to God*, are circumſtances which juſtify the application of this houſe to the temple at Jeruſalem, the city and the houſe *which God choſe to place his name there*.

With the ſame view of encouraging Job to repentance, Elihu lays before him the poſſibility of his reſtoration from precedent and ex-

[i] Johnſon's *Sermons*, Vol. II. *Pref.*

[k] Ch. xxii. 22.

ample. *In a dream, in a viſion of the night, when deep ſleep falleth upon men, in ſlumbrings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men and ſealeth their inſtruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpoſe, and hide pride from man; he keepeth back his ſoul from the pit, and his life from periſhing by the ſword; he is chaſtened alſo with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with ſtrong pain, ſo that his life abhorreth bread, and his ſoul dainty meat; his fleſh is conſumed away that it cannot be ſeen, and his bones, that were not ſeen, ſtick out, yea his ſoul draweth near to the grave, and his life to the deſtroyers. If there be a meſſenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thouſand, to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs: then he is gracious unto him, and ſaith, deliver him from going down into the pit: I have found a ranſom, his fleſh ſhall be freſher than a child's, he ſhall return to the days of his youth; he ſhall pray to God, and he will be favorable unto him, and he ſhall ſee his face with joy*[l].

A detail more circumſtantial of God's dealing with Hezekiah cou'd not well be given, unleſs we go back to the account the book of *Kings* gives of it, which as it is both ſhorter and more particular than that in *the Chronicles*[m], I ſhall lay before the reader. *In thoſe days was Hezekiah ſick unto death, and Iſaiah, the ſon of Amoz, came unto him, and ſaid unto him, thus ſaith the Lord, ſet thine houſe in order, for thou ſhalt die and not live; then he turned his face unto the wall, and prayed to the Lord; and it came to paſs afore Iſaiah was gone out into the middle of the court, that the word of the Lord came unto him, ſaying, thus ſaith the Lord, I have heard thy prayer, I have ſeen thy tears; behold I will heal thee, and on the third day thou ſhalt go up unto the houſe of the Lord; and Iſaiah ſaid, take a lump of figs, and they took and laid it on the boyl and he recover'd*[n].

To ſo ſtriking an alluſion as this, I muſt beſpeak the reader's more than ordinary attention, ſince ſome ſtreſs is likely to be laid upon it in what follows, and Job's dramatic life will appear to have more to do with it than he may poſſibly be aware of: here we ſee a great, and upon the whole a good king, fallen into the hands of God, and viſited by a ſickneſs attended with all the ſymptoms of death, yet reſtored again to life and health, and fifteen years added to his days. In the ſucceeding reign we have an inſtance of the king his ſon and ſucceſſor, fallen into the hands of man, actually a priſoner and captive, but reſtored again to his crown and kingdom

[l] Ch. xxxiii. 15. [m] 2 Chron. xxxii. 24. [n] 2 Kings xx. 1. Div: Leg. Vol. II. p. 497.

upon his humbling himſelf before God. The ſtory as it lies in the book of Chronicles, is this; *the Lord ſpake unto Manaſſeh and his people, but they hearken'd not: therefore the Lord brought upon him the army of the king of Aſſyria, which took Manaſſeh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him captive to Babylon. And he was in affliction, and humbled himſelf greatly before the Lord God of his fathers, and pray'd unto him: and he was intreated of him, and heard his ſupplications, and brought him again to Jeruſalem into his kingdom; then Manaſſeh knew that the Lord he was God.*

Two ſo very ſingular inſtances in one family, and within ſo ſmall a compaſs of time, one reduced from an exceſs of pride to the moſt devout humiliation, the other from one of the bloodieſt tyrants become one of the beſt monarchs, both reſtored by the immediate interpoſition of God, were too remarkable, and too applicable we ſhall ſhortly ſee, to the argument of this book, not to be copied out for Job's information; and if ever a copy reſembled it's original, it is that which is here drawn from what is recorded of Manaſſeh. *If kings be bound in chains, and holden in cords of affliction, then God ſheweth them their tranſgreſſion, and that they have exceeded: he openeth their ear alſo to diſcipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity: if they obey and ſerve him they ſhall ſpend their days in proſperity and their years in pleaſure; but if they obey not they ſhall periſh by the ſword*[o]. Abating the ſingle reign of good Joſiah, this in fact is a very compendious hiſtory of all the kings of Judah down from Manaſſeh to Zedekiah; for Ammon and Jehoiakim both periſhed in battle againſt Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt; and the remaining three, Jehoaaz, Jehoiakim and Zedekiah were carried into captivity[p].

Traces ſuch as theſe, of jewiſh ſtory, are too ſtrong and too numerous likewiſe to eſcape a very particular obſervation: and at the ſame time that they clearly enough inſinuate the diſpenſation, under which this book muſt have been written, bid fair too for fixing the date of it, which if this be the true account of them, is haſtening apace towards the Babyloniſh captivity. But there is no diſmiſſing of this head without obſerving, that there are traces too of their law, ſtrong and numerous in this book; but as theſe are ſcattered through thoſe parts of it which come next under examination, I ſhall rather reſerve them for their proper places, than trouble the reader with

[o] Ch. xxxvi. 8. [p] Johnſon's *Sermons, Pref.* Vol. II.

the

the repetition of them; and ſhall cloſe this ſection with one particular alluſion to the law of Moſes, and to a known cuſtom among the Jews, which has hitherto ſhared the ſame fate with the reſt, of being as little diſcover'd as underſtood.

Mention has been already made of one crime to be puniſhed by the judges, and that was idolatry: we are now to take a view of another, and that is adultery. *If mine heart have been deceiv'd by a woman, or if I have laid wait at my neighbour's door, then let my wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her; for this is an heinous crime, yea it is an iniquity to be puniſh'd by the judges*[q]. The crime and its puniſhment too are plain enough; the Levitical law has aſcertained both the one and the other, and the ſin its-ſelf ſtands at the head of the many which brought upon God's people the Babyloniſh captivity; but the iſſue upon which he reſts this aſſeveration of his innocence, *let my wife grind to another man*, calls for ſome further light than has yet been reflected upon it.

Grotius and Vatablus have got rid of this difficult text by taking for granted that nothing more was meant by it, than "let my wife be ſlave to another man"; the mill or piſtrinum of the antients being here, as they conceived referred to; and ſo far indeed they were right: for that the mills of the antients were at the bottom of this metaphor I agree with them, though a ſubjection very different from that of a ſlaviſh one, be convey'd under this expreſſion. The mill in ſhort was the employ of the women only, and this we may learn from the oldeſt heathen writers; Homer makes mention of no leſs than a dozen of them at the mill in the palace of Ulyſſes[r], and of double at leaſt that number in the palace of Alcinous[s]: the mills had their tutelary deities aſſigned them in the old pagan theology[t], and public feaſts were inſtituted in honor of them; upon theſe occaſions they were adorned with crowns and garlands, had ſongs and madrigals compoſed[v], which were call'd ὠδαὶ ἐπιμυλιαὶ, *mill ſongs*, for them, and ſinging and dancing with all kinds of revelling went forward at thoſe meetings.

But the antient ſcholiaſt upon Ariſtophanes hints that ſomething more than ſinging or dancing either was practiſed at the mills,

[q] Ch. xxxi. 9. [r] Hom. Odyſſ. υ. 107. [s] Hom. Iliad. ν. 104. [t] Molæ, quotannis Romæ feriis veſtalibus ſertis ac floribus ornabantur, & quieſcebant in memoriam priſtini temporis, quo farra ſolummodo in furnis veſtæ torreri conſueverant. Et Promylius Deus ſemper ante eas collocabatur. Hoffman. Ὠδὴς δὲ ονομασιας Ἰμαιος, ἡ Επιμυλιες καλουμενη, ἣν παρα τας ἀλήξεις ἠδον. Ath. Deip. l. xiv. [v] Jul. Pollux. Onomaſt. l. vii.

and

and that they were the ſcenes of lewdneſs as well as of jollity [u]; and if we take along with us the character Plutarch gives of Pittacus king of Mitylene, whom he calls ζοφοδορπις, from the delight he took in midnight debauches, we ſhall be at little loſs for his condeſcenſion, when we find him taking his turn along with the women at the mill, and a ſong compoſed in honor of that viſit, which was afterwards in the mouths always of the grinders [w].

There is an epigram of Antipater's, quoted in *Barnes*'s notes upon a paſſage in Homer's Odyſſey, where the crowing of the cock appears to be the ſignal for the women in the mill to riſe by, and where we may ſee ſomething of the ſpirit and nature of their employment.

See pag. 330.

Ἰσχεῖε χειρα μυλαιον ἀλεῖριδες· ἐυδεῖε μακρα
Κην ὀρθρον προλεγη γηρυς ἀλεκῖρυονος.
Δηω γαρ νυμφαισι χορων ἐωτείλαῖο μοχθυς.
Αι δε καῖ ακροῖαῖην ἀλλομεναι τροχιην
Ἀξονα δινευυσιν. ὁ δ' ακῖινεσσιν ἐλικῖαις
Στρωφαῖαι πισυρων κοιλα βαρη μυλακων [x].

Ye female artiſans who grind the corn,
Indulge in ſlumbers all the live-long morn!
And let the cock with impotent eſſay
Recite his uſual prologue to the day!
For Ceres ſelf now bids her nymphs advance
And ſhare the painful paſtime of the dance.
See! on the ſummit buxomly they bound,
And with their gambols work the axle round:
True to the tread impulſive winds the wheel,
Whilſt four huge millſtones form the mould'ring meal.

Neither was this cuſtom peculiar to the heathens; the Jews too had their mills, and upon a little farther enquiry we ſhall find that they fell little ſhort either of the jollity or of the lewdneſs of the heathen: thus we read of the *maid ſervant behind the mill* in the old teſtament [y], and of *two women grinding at the mill* in the new [z]; and to this day the eaſtern nations preſerve the ſame cuſtom, and the women alone are employed at them, and all the while they are grind-

[u] Ἀδειν τε πινοθ' ὡσπερει καχρυς γυναικ' ἀλεσαν. Ariſt. Nub. Act. V. Sc. ii. Διαβαλλει δε λεληθοῖως το των γυναικων γενος, αἰς ἐργον πινειν ἡ ἑτερον τι διαπρατῖομεναις. Schol.
[w] Plut. Symp. ch. iv. n. 6. Hom. Odyſſ. υ. in notis ad l. 107. [x] Hom. Odyſſ. υ. Ed. Barn. in notis ad l. 107. [y] Exod. ii. 5. [z] Mat. xxiv. 41.

ing

ing amuſe themſelves with ſinging[a]. The prophets very remarkably join together theſe two employments; thus Jeremiah threatens the Jews with taking from them all their mirth and feſtivity. *I will take from thee the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladneſs, the voice of the bride-groom and the voice of the bride, the ſound of the millſtones*[b] *and the light of the candle.* Commentators have here no doubt but that the feſtival ſolemnities of the Jews, the lamps they lighted in their nuptial aſſemblies, and the riot they were guilty of in them are alluded to.

Again we read in the *Revelations, the voice of harpers and muſicians, and of pipers and trumpeters ſhall be heard no more, and the ſound of the millſtones ſhall be heard no more, and the light of the candle ſhall ſhine no more at all in thee; for by thy ſorceries were all nations deceived*[c]. It is of the whore of the myſtical Babylon that St. John ſpeaks in this place, and it is plainly copied from Iſaiah, when ſpeaking of the real Babylon that *tender and delicate lady, ſo given to pleaſures and to ſorceries; take,* ſays he, *the millſtones, and grind meal, uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, paſs over the rivers, thy nakedneſs ſhall be uncovered, yea thy ſhame ſhall be ſeen*[d].

The critics in general are ſtrangely offended at the indelicacy of St. Jerome's verſion of this paſſage in Job[e], and yet the Chaldee paraphraſt tranſlates it, *let her lie with ſome other man,* and the original word TAHAN is rendered in a parallel text by the LXX καθαισχυνειν[f], which in fact is grounded upon the ſame principles of criticiſm with the verſion he has given, and which the generality of them have adopted, of the words under examination[g], and to which the ſcholiaſt upon a like paſſage in Theocritus gives all the light we want[h]. In ſhort it is more than probable from all theſe places, that at the exceſſive pitch of lewdneſs thoſe revellings were got to, at the time the prophets ſpeak of, when corruptions of all kinds were ſo flagrant among the Jews, that connubial rites at leaſt were perform'd in them, if perchance greater liberties were not taken[i]. And

[a] Shaw's *Travels,* p. 297. [b] Jer. xxv. 10. *Vocem molæ* cantica puellarum molam truſantium. Grot. [c] Rev. xviii. 22. [d] Iſai. xlvii. 2.

[e] Ut in morem ſcorti, te ſubjicias libidini victoris. Hieron. notatione vocis in obſcænam flexâ, quo ipſe quoque trahere niſus eſt vocem *molere,* v. 2. Vitring. in loc.

[f] Eſai. iii. 16. [g] Molet alteri, i. e. ſcortum ſit alterius. Hieron. in loc.

[h] Ἐιπ' αγε μοι Κορυδων το γεροντιον ἡ ῥ' ἐλι μυλλοι
Τηναν ταν κυανοφρυ ἐρωλιδα τας πόλ' ἐκνισθη.
Idyll. δ. l. 58. μυλλει. εὐθει. ἐλαυνει. ἀπο των ἀλεσίων ἡ τη κοπη τυς μυλλυς ἐυθυνων. Schol.

[i] Conſiſtent with his comment upon theſe two texts, is that St. Jerom gives of Judg. xvi. 21.

And from ſome ſuch comment as this, we may hope in time to come at ſome better account than has yet been given, of the xiith chapter of *Eccleſiaſtes*, where once more we hear of *the ſtrong men bowing themſelves* [k]; of *the grinders* [l] *ceaſing becauſe they are few*; of *the ſound of the grinding being low*; and of *the daughters of muſick being brought low* [m]. One particular is here inſerted of *riſing up at the voice of the bird*, which may receive ſome light I think, from that epigram of Antipater's, and ſo may the other expreſſions; but interpreters, one and all, have copied the antient Targum in their expoſitions of this whole chapter, and the allegory there ſuggeſted of the infirmities attending upon old age, runs through all of them; and yet I cannot help ſuſpecting, from both the analogy of language and from the context its-ſelf, that it is the revellings at the mills, and the ſhameful intercourſe of the ſexes there practiſed, that is the foundation of all this deſcription.

What confirms me in this ſuſpicion is, that the advice *remember now thy creator*, at the opening of this chapter, is addreſs'd particularly to young men, and is the reſult of that fine irony with which the preceding chapter cloſes: *rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes; but know thou that for all theſe things God will bring thee into judgment.* The ſacred writer then proceeds to evince the truth of this obſervation by laying before him where all this lewdneſs and riot of his would neceſſarily end, for that in the firſt place the days wou'd come when he ſhould loſe all reliſh for them; and in the next, that death muſt put an end to him and them too; that *man muſt go* of courſe *to his long home, and the mourners* for him *go about the ſtreets.*

After cautioning him againſt the intrigues and debauches of the mill and its minſtrels, his next leſſon or I much miſtake it, regards thoſe dangerous dainties which were introduced into their banquets, and ſerved only as ſo many incentives to luſt and intemperance; here particular mention is made of *the almond*, which Bochart informs us [n], made one part of the old entertainments, and Athe-

21. Samſon *ad molam damnatus*, hoc ſignificare volunt, quod *pro ſobole* robuſtiſſimus virorum hoc in allophylas mulieres facere ſit compulſus: but as this ſeems rather a conceit borrow'd from the Rabbins, I lay little ſtreſs upon it; however it ſhews the antiquity of theſe lewd practices at the mills.

[k] Incurvabunt ſe homines roboris. Ar. Mont. compared with Job, ch. xxxi. 10.

[l] Molatrices Vulg. αἱ ἀληθουσαι. LXX. [m] Eccl. xii. 5. [n] Bochart Phaleg. in vocem.

Yo

næus reckons them among the principal viands in their deſerts[o]; then of the *Graſhopper*, which the ſame author informs us were provided by way of whet, or provoking of appetite[p]: and in the grand banquet made by Anaxander for Cotys king of Thrace, the moſt voluptuous prince that ever reigned there, we find one diſh conſiſted of roaſted graſhoppers[q]; then mention is made of *the Caper*[r], for ſo the ſyriac and arabic verſion render the word HAABEIONAH, and the LXX follow them, and this again Athenæus ſpeaks of in the claſs of provocatives to appetite[s], and Le Clerc conſiders it in the ſame light[t]. *St. Jerom's Latin* has the ſame tranſlation with the LXX, and our Engliſh renders it *deſire*, and the whole tribe of commentators call it either concupiſcence, lewdneſs or gluttony[u].

All the ſeveral interpretations of this word agree we ſee in this one point, that ſomething or other it was that led to luſt, that was here meant; and this idea of that paſſage connects it cloſely with the preceding one, where lewdneſs is ſo particularly deſcribed, and leaves I apprehend, no queſtion but that the luxury and debauchery that was apt to inſinuate its ſelf into their entertainments, and to break out in the too free and frequent indulgence of ſuch high food into criminal gratifications, are at the bottom of this difficulty. And with this key along with him I am perſuaded, that the learned critick, verſed more deeply in the hebrew tongue than I pretend to be, may come at the true ſenſe of this chapter, and diſentangle it of all that embarraſs and perplexity in which a crude ſuſpicious allegory, taken up at a venture, and purſued at all adventures, has involved it; and juſtice may at length be done to the ſenſe and beauty of a deſcription which promiſes both, but in its preſent obſcurity has but little pretenſions to either.

[o] Ath. Deipn. l. xiv. [p] Ἐισθιον δι᾽ ἡ τεττιγας ἀναστωμωσεως χαριν. Ib. l. iv. [q] Τεττιγας οπτους. Ib. [r] Eccl. xii. 5. [s] Ath. Deipn. l. iv [t] Bacca ſale condita excitat orexin. Cl. in loc. [u] *Lipido*. Grot. *Concupiſcentia* erga mulieres vel ciborum appetitus. Clar. KAPPARIM. Gem.

SECT. II.

IT were eaſy to carry on this inter-community of jewiſh and heathen cuſtoms throughout the whole book under examination, if enough had not been already ſaid to ſhew an exact and ſurpriſing likeneſs in a great variety of inſtances; it has been indeed through a tedious kind of diſcipline, and through a dreary wilderneſs, that the reader has been conducted to the diſcovery of the promiſed land; prejudices and jealouſies old and inveterate were all along to be encountered, and where every inch of ground has been diſputed, it required all the care and circumſpection of one paſſing through an enemy's country, to avoid giving offence in the firſt place, and in the next to arrive at our point with any tolerable certainty. We are now however upon the borders of one of the fineſt countries in the old world, within ſight as it were of the holy city and its temple; what pity that we are not to view it in all its priſtine glory, but to rake only into the aſhes and ſurvey the ruins of all thoſe illuſtrious piles!

That the book we are enquiring after is not of the pagan, but of the jewiſh caſt, is by this time I conceive, placed beyond all ſuſpicion, yet what period it is in jewiſh antiquity that the author has fixt upon for the ſubject of this performance, whether it be ſome one particular tribe, or all the twelve tribes of Iſrael in their joint confederate capacity that is here alluded to, are queſtions which muſt firſt be reſolved e're we can hope to attain any critical certainty in this enquiry; for like the great ſcenes of action in antient ſtory, Greece, Italy and Sicily, the Iſraelites were divided into ſmaller commonwealths, and their tribes put under the command of ſeveral princes, who were generals in their wars, and preſided in their councils in peace; upon enterprizes of particular conſequence ſome one of theſe princes was always pitched upon for the ſupreme command of their armies, and the poſt of honor we may obſerve, was generally allotted to Judah.

We have by no means therefore yet done with what was promiſed at firſt to be the grand clue to the unravelling this whole compoſition, I CHOSE OUT THEIR WAY AND SATE CHIEF, I SATE AS A KING IN THE ARMY. For what the tabernacle of the covenant

was

was in the camp of the divine majeſty, that was Judah in the camp of Iſrael; for certain it is that the Iſraelitiſh camp was divided into two parts, in the centre ſtood *the tabernacle*, and round about it pitched Moſes and Aaron with the tribe of Levi, and this was call'd the *camp of the divine majeſty*; in the outer parts, round about Levi, the twelve tribes pitched their tents, each under his own particular ſtandard, and this was properly *the camp of Iſrael*; at the head of this ſate Judah in all his glory, he it was that took the lead of all the twelve tribes in this miraculous expedition, whenever they incamped we find his ſtandard in the front of their camp, and whenever they decamped, he marched in the van of their army.

That this was their diſpoſition is clear from the appointment that God himſelf revealed to Moſes, as well as from the particular diſtinction paid all along to Judah in this reſpect; thus we read, *On the eaſt ſide towards the riſing of the ſun*, the old ſituation of the imperial tent [a], *ſhall the ſtandard of Judah pitch* [b]; in the journeying of the Iſraelites from mount Sinai, *the people took their journeys, according to the commandment of the Lord by the hand of Moſes, and in the firſt place went the ſtandard of the camp of the children of Judah* [c]; at the diviſion of the borders of the land of Canaan, one prince is taken out of every tribe to divide the land by lot among them, and the firſt prince we hear of appointed to this ſervice, is Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh of the tribe of Judah [d]. A little lower down, the Iſraelites upon the death of Joſhua aſk of the Lord, who ſhall take the lead of them to the promiſed land, *who ſhall go up for us againſt the Canaanites firſt to fight againſt them? And the Lord anſwered, Judah ſhall go up, behold I have delivered that land into his hand* [e]. And a little lower ſtill, upon their aſking council of God on occaſion of an inteſtin commotion in the tribe of Benjamin, they aſk, *which of us ſhall go up firſt againſt the children of Benjamin?* when Judah is appointed once more to his old poſt, *and the Lord ſaid, Judah ſhall go up firſt* [f].

In ſhort in all the wars of the twelve tribes Judah appears to be the general, and the ſafety of all the reſt ſeems to have depended upon his particular courage and conduct: ſo that whatever elſe the other tribes might diſpute with him, this was the prize which not one of them, ſcarce indeed all put together were able to do; for on ac-

[a] Porta prætoria aut orientem ſpectare debet, aut locum qui reſpicit hoſtem. Veg. Lib. i. p. 118. [b] Numb. ii. 2. [c] x. 13. [d] xxxiv. 18. [e] Judg. i 2. [f] xx. 18.

count of his ſuperior numbers it was due to him, and on account of his warlike character it was always aſſigned him. So true is that deſcription of him, given him in the bleſſing of his father Jacob, *Judah thou art he whom thy brethren ſhall praiſe, thy hand ſhall be in the neck of thine enemies, Judah is a lion's whelp, from the prey my ſon thou art gone up: he ſtooped down, he couched down as a lion, and as an old lion's whelp; who ſhall rouſe him up* [g]? upon which a learned prelate has very juſtly obſerved, " to what elſe can we apply thoſe images of bravery and courage, but to the martial diſpoſition of the tribe of Judah, and to their victories obtained over the antient poſſeſſors of the land of Canaan [h]?"

And in alluſion to this lion Judah's emblem, we have a maſterly piece of raillery thrown out by Eliphaz, at the very firſt interview with Job in his humiliation: *the roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, and the teeth of the young lions are broken, the old lion periſheth for lack of prey, and the ſtout lion's whelps are ſcattered abroad* [i]. Men of curious learning in theſe particulars, and our own Ainſworth among the reſt, have long been of opinion, that Judah's ſtandard had a lion rampant painted upon it.

However that be, he is mentioned generally under this image, and Balaam in that conference of his with Balak, where he betrays ſuch evident marks of his inclinations to oblige that prince by curſing the Iſraelites [k], declines at laſt the errand on account of God's viſible care and protection of that warlike people, whom he paints under this very image: *Surely there is no enchantment againſt Jacob, nor any divination againſt Iſrael, behold the people ſhall riſe up as a great lion, and lift himſelf up as a young lion, he ſhall not lie down till he eat of* the *prey and drink the blood of the ſlain* [l]. And again, we are told in the *Revelations*, that when no man in heaven or on the earth was worthy to open the book with the ſeven ſeals, *the lion of the tribe of Judah prevailed* [m].

Of the ſeed therefore of Jacob Job no doubt was, and upon a little farther knowledge of him, I am much deceived if he turn not out of the tribe of Judah, nay if it be not the kingdom of Judah its-ſelf, as it ſtands diſtinguiſhed from the kingdom of Iſrael, that is ſhadowed both in the proſperity, adverſity and reſtoration of Job; in the journeying of the twelve tribes indeed through the wilderneſs,

[g] Gen. xlix. 8. [h] Sherlock's *Diſc.* p. 302. [i] Chap. iv. 10. [k] See an admirable defence of this caſe in a pamphlet, *the caſe of Abraham*, &c. *and the ſtory of Balaam conſidered in anſwer to Mr. Chubb*, p. 44. [l] Numb. xxiii 23. [m] Rev. v. 5.

as

as they had all one common origin, and were united in one common body for mutual ſtrength and ſecurity: they are ſpoken of in the chapter we have been conſidering, as one people under one common head, and ſo they continued to be both under their judges and their kings, till the revolt of the ten tribes under Jeroboam.

Upon this event begins a very extraordinary revolution of their government, and a new ſcene of all their affairs; for from this time we find two diſtinct kingdoms erected among them, and thoſe at continual war either with the neighbouring nations or with each other, both in their turns carried captive to Aſſyria or Babylon; ſtill there was one great difference in the fortunes of theſe two kingdoms, the ten tribes never more returned to their country, but the tribe of Judah after ſeventy years captivity came back again to their own land, erected a new temple, and continued to be a people, and a formidable one too, to the very laſt deſtruction of Jeruſalem by the Romans.

And now we are coming to a cloſer acquaintance with Job the hero of this poem, and from this time are to view him in a light very different from that which we have thus far ſeen him in, a monarch without guards or equipage, without either palace or camp, ſerved only by ſhepherds, and ruling over cattle; there is a pleaſure in going back to the primitive ſimplicity of thoſe early ages of the world, and compareing them with the luxury of later times, in ſurveying princes feeding their flocks when their dominions conſiſted of but little more than the neighbouring vales, and their ſubjects were ſheep and oxen; nor is this any ideal account of the original ſtate of monarchy, that monſter of ſucceeding ages: princes were then what nature form'd them for, the guardians of both the lives and the liberties of their people: their buſineſs was the preſervation and well being of their flock, they lived in eaſe and affluence, and the tranquillity of the rural life, unattended with ambition, and undebauched by luxury, was accompanied with innocence and contentment.

Homer's princes are moſt of them drawn in this light, and the firſt and greateſt of all the kings of Iſrael was taken from the ſheepfolds; God's raiſing him to be a king was but exalting him to a noble office of much the ſame nature with that he found him in, for *as he was following the ewes, great with young ones, he took him that he might feed Jacob his people, and Iſrael his inheritance*[n]; this ſhould

[n] Pſ. lxxviii. 70.

teach

teach us, what a great author, who without refinement, extracts ſome uſeful doctrine from every incident, has obſerved upon the ſcripture ſtory of antient princes, to reſtrain and limit our ideas, when we read of kings and princes, and ſceptres and judges and nations in thoſe early times, and not to imagine, becauſe the words are the ſame we now uſe, that they muſt neceſſarily ſignify as high degrees of powers as they now do [o].

Conſiſtent therefore with the manners of the old world is the picture we are here preſented with of Job: the images under which the economy of his family, the affluence of his fortunes, the piety of his conduct, the calamities that befell him, and his emerging at length out of them are convey'd, are all of this eaſt plain and paſtoral: and though the dramatic part abound with language and figures of a different kind, yet is there the ſtricteſt uniformity preſerv'd throughout the whole prologue and epilogue [p] in this reſpect, and the increaſe of Job's herds and flocks in the concluſion, reſtore to him all that happineſs of which he had been deprived in the opening of this performance.

This premiſed, let us now try the ſame experiment upon the prologue, which has ſucceeded ſo greatly upon the ſeveral paſſages already quoted from the drama, and ſee whether after all, it be not the tribe and kingdom of Judah, which lies hidden under this deſcription; if this ſucceed, the ſeveral parts of this compoſition will reflect mutual light upon each other, and they will be found to have ſo cloſe a connection, that inſtead of that wretched reſort which has been had to ſome later writer for the introduction and concluſion of this book, becauſe they were of a different nature from the reſt [q], it will appear upon a fair examination, that if neither the ſufferings of Job had been related in the ſetting out, nor his reſtoration at the cloſe of it, the book its-ſelf had been not the dark difficult one it has been accounted in all ages, but utterly abſurd and unintelligible. In ſhort, they who contrived this expedient ſeem, as a learned author judiciouſly remarks, to have had but a very ſlender idea of the antient

[o] Sherlock's *Diſcourſes*, p. 303. [p] What is here call'd the prologue is ch. i. and ii. and the epilogue begins at v. 7. of ch. xlii. which it is agreed, are written in a different ſtile and manner from the intermediate part, which is conſider'd as the drama, and is written in verſe. [q] De introductione, cap. i. and ii. ſtylo pedeſtri & hiſtorico præmiſſâ; itemque de clauſula, quæ fortunatiſſimum diri caſûs exitum ſolutâ oratione enarrat a v. 7. cap. xlii. ſic cenſet Schultens, Hebræi alicujus collectoris veſtigia in iis comparere, quæ probabilem moveant conjecturam, tum principium tum finem, illo ſaltem habitu, ad textum eſſe ab aliquo vatum Hebræorum, quum in canonem eccleſiæ Judaicæ Codex hicce Hebræo-Arabicus eciperetur. Grey. Lib. Job. Præf. p. 10.

drama

drama, which was generally rounded by a prologue and an epilogue of this kind, to give by way of narrative, information of ſuch facts, as fell not within the compaſs of the one entire action repreſented [r], and yet were neceſſary to be known to give the reader warning of what was going forward in the ſcene.

In the ſtory of Job a very particular diſtinction we may obſerve is paid him, as being *the greateſt of all the men of the eaſt*; what it was that made him ſo the poet informs us, a very great houſehold, a very numerous family and dependants, and flocks and herds in proportion; for *his ſubſtance was ſeven hundred ſheep, three thouſand camels, five hundred yokes of oxen, and five hundred ſhe aſſes* [s], a ſubſtance no doubt far ſuperior to any of his neighbours. So much riches, for theſe were the only riches of the old world, fell not to the ſhare of God's people, as to diſtinguiſh them thus remarkably from their neighbours, neither did their numbers it muſt be owned, put them in ſo very advantageous a light as to ſtand in competition with the neighbouring nations, much leſs to entitle them to the preference here given to Job in this reſpect; for how that matter ſtood Moſes tells them, *the Lord did not ſet his love upon you and chooſe you, becauſe ye were more in number than any people, for ye were the feweſt of all people, but becauſe the Lord loved you* [t].

When God declared at firſt his love to Abraham, ſo far from having ſeven ſons and three daughters, he had no child at all, and after he had children, his family continued ſo remarkably ſmall even after there were twelve heirs of the promiſe, that in the ſpace of two hundred years, there were but ſeventy perſons in it, nor do we read of any conſiderable increaſe in their numbers till fourſcore years after: ſo that this very great houſehold if applicable at all to God's people, cannot with any tolerable propriety be applied to them till their return from Egypt, when indeed they multiplied exceedingly both in the numbers of themſelves and of their herds: nor to ſpeak the truth, were they even then the greateſt of all the men of the eaſt.

And yet all this hinders not, why this peculiar diſtinction might not belong to ſome one or other of them, why a diſtinction which holds not good of God's people in their collective body, when compared with other nations, may not yet be true of ſome particular tribe, when we come to compare them with one another: and ſo

[r] Div. Leg. Vol. II. p. 484. [s] Ch. i. 3. [t] Deut. vii. 7.

though

though Iſrael were neither the moſt numerous, the moſt rich nor the moſt religious of all the eaſtern people, yet Judah may turn out to have all theſe marks of precedence above the other eleven tribes, and prove at laſt to be the very great and good man upon whom the ſacred writer beſtows all this encomium.

Conſider now the peculiar diſtinction paid all along to the tribe of Judah, and the pre-eminence ſuggeſted will be very clear; for numbers, it is very certain no tribe could ſtand in competition with it: for at the exit of the Iſraelites from Egypt, this one tribe conſiſted of ſeventy four thouſand ſix hundred men [v], and exceeded even the tribe of Dan the next to it, by twelve thouſand men, and thoſe of little Benjamin and Manaſſeh put together, by ſeven thouſand; accordingly the portion of the whole ſouthern part of Paleſtine, that fell to its ſhare in the diviſion of the land of Canaan, was nearly equal in extent to that of all the other tribes, and in conſequence of its ſuperior numbers it has been already obſerved, what ſingular honors were paid it in the motions and operations of this mighty army.

After the revolt of the ten tribes, and its becoming a ſeparate kingdom, Judah ſtill preſerved his ſuperiority, and coped with the whole kingdom of Iſrael, and with the neighbouring nations in their turns; when king David number'd the people, he found but thirteen hundred thouſand effective men in the whole kingdom of Iſrael, and yet in the reign of Jehoſhaphat, the ſingle kingdom of Judah which was little more than the third part of David's, muſtered eleven hundred and ſixty thouſand ready prepared for war [w], excluſive of guards and garriſons; in ſhort this comparatively ſmall kingdom could bring more effective men into the field in two days than the whole empire of the eaſt could do in ſo many years.

It ſhould ſeem from all this, that Judah of the favorite people of God, was manifeſtly the favorite tribe, indulged with the higheſt privileges and vouchſafed the greateſt honors, and though not indeed inveſted with either ſupreme or legiſlative power over the others, for againſt that an inſuperable objection has been interpoſed [x], yet diſtinguiſhed beyond them all, by every other token of precedence.

And thus happy in all the outward advantages of ſtrength and numbers, victorious in its arms and flouriſhing in its common-wealth, it had the additional honors of giving its name to the whole promiſed land, and of having the holy city and the temple upon its bor-

[v] Numb. i. 27. [w] Joſh. xv. 23. 2 Chr. xvii. 14. [x] Sherlock *Diſc.* p. 300.

der, for if the Pſalmiſt underſtood their ſituation, *the Lord refuſed the tabernacle of Joſeph, and choſe not the tribe of Ephraim, but choſe the tribe of Judah, even the hill of Sion, which he loved, and there he built his temple on high, and laid the foundations of it like the ground, which he had made continually*[x]. Whatever Benjamin might diſpute with him in this particular, in the original diviſion of Canaan made by Joſhua, yet Judah had a double claim to it, for it was built upon his frontier, and it was his too by right of conqueſt.

Still beſides all theſe, there was one inconteſtable prerogative that went along with this tribe, and affixed a ſacred character to it, and that was the aſſurance of *the promiſed ſeed, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be bleſſed*; here again Judah, as we learn from the *Chronicles, prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the rulers, though the birthright was Joſeph's*[y]; to Iſrael in general *appertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law and the ſervice of God, and the promiſes, and theirs were the fathers:* but of Judah, *as concerning the fleſh, Chriſt came, who is over all, God bleſſed for ever*[z]. This was a ſecret, that was in the poſſeſſion of this tribe only, and which probably intailed upon it God's peculiar care and protection, ſo viſible in the preſervation of it after the utter deſtruction of its ſiſter-tribes, and in the reſtoration of it again from the Babyloniſh captivity.

And at this very ſecret it is, that Eliphaz the Temanite glances, where he calls Job to taſk upon the ſubject of his taking upon himſelf ſo much ſtate and majeſty, and aſſuming an air of ſome ſuperior attainments above his brethren. *Art thou the firſt man that was born, or waſt thou made before the hills; haſt thou alone heard the ſecret of God, and doſt thou reſtrain wiſdom to thy ſelf; what knoweſt thou that we know not, and what underſtandeſt thou that is not in us*[a]*?*

Take for the preſent, this expoſtulation but in this light, and it is keen and pointed, for a ſecret there was in the hands of Judah, neither communicated to nor underſtood by his brethren, and one too upon which he valued himſelf, as he might well do, not a little; and accordingly, as it was the ſpecial privilege of this tribe, that it was honored with ſo extraordinary a promiſe, ſo too was it its glory, that it kept this point more immediately in view, that it preſerved for a long time the ſervice of the temple, the public exer-

[x] Pſ. lxxviii. 68. [y] 1 Chr. v. 1. [z] Rom. ix. 4. [a] Ch. xv. 7.

ciſe of the prieſthood, and the true religion left in truſt with it by the bleſſing of Jacob, whilſt the ten tribes had given themſelves up wholly to idolatry, and worſhipped the golden calves: ſo true is that character of it in Job, its repreſentative, that he was *perfect and upright, one that feared God*[b], *and eſchewed evil*; there was a time when he was all this, and happy had it been for him had he continued ſo.

Of this religious obſervance of the legal ceremonies of the temple we have a notable inſtance at the very firſt opening of this poem, where under covert of ſome anniverſary feaſts in Job's family, we have the ſtrongeſt traits of one of the greateſt and moſt ſolemn feaſts recorded in the whole hiſtory of the Jews; an incident, which properly attended to, will lead us gradually both into the ſubject and the nature of the whole poem, and ſhew the ground-work of it to be laid in the very extraordinary character and circumſtances of one of the greateſt and moſt religious princes, that ever reigned in Judah.

The reader's attention has been already beſpoke to the caſe of Hezekiah in an inſtance where a very glareing likeneſs, in the dramatic part of this work, has been inſinuated, and upon a nearer view of his ſtory, the whole ſcenical repreſentation of Job will appear or I am much deceived, to be copied from it; not that the allegory reſts here: it is the Jews again that are ſhadowed in his hiſtory, and though I do not remember to have ſeen it any where inſiſted upon, plain it is that a type more ſignificant or more preciſe of both the captivity and the reſtoration of the Jews is not to be met with in the old teſtament, than that exhibited in the piety, ſickneſs and recovery of this prince.

For Hezekiah was upon the whole, both a pious man and an excellent prince, and the teſtimony born to him is, that *he truſted in the Lord God of Iſrael, ſo that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that was before him*[c]; but with all his zeal he had his foibles, and like the people he governed, vanity was his predominant paſſion, and a wonderful ſeries of ſucceſſes contributed to ſwell both him and them to an unreaſonable pitch of pride: like them too, he was at laſt made ſenſible of his folly by a ſevere

[b] The phraſe *one that feared God* imports no more than that he was a Jew. So the Hebrew midwives are ſaid *to fear God*, and would not therefore ſlay the children, Exod. i. 17. So Nehemiah vii. 2. gave his brother Hanani charge over Jeruſalem, *for he feared God above many men in Iſrael*, i. e. was a more rigid Jew. So St. Paul addreſſes the Jews in their Synagogue at Antioch, *men of Iſrael and ye that fear God*, Acts xiii. 16. [c] 2 Kings xviii. 2. Φυσις δε ην αυτω χρηστη, κ) δικαια, κ) θεοσεβης, Joſ. Ant. Liv. ix. cap. 13.

viſitation

viſitation from a malignant boil, and recovered from it by the interpoſition of a prophet, and fifteen years added to his life.

Of whom then could the poet have made choice for the hero of his work ſo properly, as this great king, or what incident in jewiſh hiſtory could he have ſeized ſo happily, ſuppoſing the buſineſs of it to be the captivity of that kingdom, as that very reign in which it began to operate [c], and wherein he had been expreſly forewarned, from the prophet's own mouth, that thoſe very Babylonians, whoſe embaſſadors he had been ſo forward in entertaining with a ſight of all the wealth, grandeur and ſtrength of his court and kingdom, would in a ſhort time ſtrip it of all that was valuable in it, and not only ſo, but even *carry away captive his very offspring and make them eunuchs*, as in fact they did, *in their monarch's palace* [d]?

It is very remarkable that this is the firſt time we hear of the Babyloniſh captivity; Moſes had foretold very clearly the Iſraelites being carried into exile and their returning again from it [e], but the place whither they were to be carried away, was hitherto a profound ſecret; the prophet Elijah, in the beginning of the reign of Jeroboam, had proceeded a little farther and ſaid, they ſhould be carried beyond the Euphrates [f], and Amos ſtill more particularly, that they ſhould go into captivity beyond Damaſcus [g]; Iſaiah, at the opening of his prophecy, though he very explicity predicts the ruin of the jewiſh republic, and the ſpoiling of their country by a fierce and cruel enemy, ſtill keeps the Babylonian out of ſight, but here, at this interview with Hezekiah, without either figure or ceremony, takes an opportunity to point out to him the very place of their approaching captivity.

And this has long been a difficulty, which has greatly embarraſſed both the curious and the thinking enquirer into jewiſh hiſtory, why the firſt opportunity that is taken of mentioning their captivity at Babylon, ſhould be in a reign ſo diſtant from this event, and upon a circumſtance ſeemingly ſo trifling, but however ſo foreign to any thing of public concern, as Hezekiah's vanity; the ſacred hiſtorian has juſt indeed remarked, that *in the buſineſs of the embaſſadors of the princes of Babylon, God left him to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart* [h]; but as that trial was merely perſonal, the difficulty ſtill recurs, and why a judgement ſo ſevere, as a national captivity,

[d] 2 Kings xxx. 18. Iſ. xxxviii. 5. [e] Iſ. xxxix. 5. [f] Liv. xxvi. 40. [g] 1 Kings xiv. 15. [h] Amos v. 27. [i] 2 Chr. xxxii. 31.

ſhould be denounced upon the whole jewiſh people, becauſe of their prince's folly, is the queſtion.

Let us go back then to his ſtory, and find out if we can, what was really the grounds of this matter, for it is of conſequence to have it clearly ſtated in a work, which profeſſes to fix upon this very period for the period referred to in the poem, and upon this very character of Hezekiah for the character that is ſhadowed in Job.

Merodach-Baladan king of Babylon, having heard of Hezekiah's dangerous ſickneſs, ſent embaſſadors with letters of congratulation upon his recovery; the king received thoſe embaſſadors with all the reſpect and honors due to their character, and among other expreſſions of civility, entertained them with a ſight of his treaſury and his armory, and of every thing either in his palace or in his kingdom that was curious. Where now was the harm of all this? theſe were compliments paid of courſe to all public embaſſadors and ſtrangers of any diſtinction throughout all the eaſt. Crœſus did the ſame upon the viſit made him by Solon: within three or four days after his arrival, he ordered him to be entertained with a ſight of his treaſury and other curioſities [i]; ſo that this civility of Hezekiah's ſimply conſidered, had nothing in it, to all appearance, blameable or criminal; ſomething therefore there muſt have been in his behaviour upon this occaſion, wherein his public character was hurt, ſomething that had ſome connection or other with the honor of his kingdom and of his people, and perhaps too of his God, that could draw from the prophet ſo ſevere a ſentence.

A learned critick [k] who has gone to the bottom of this whole prophecy of Iſaiah's, is of opinion that Hezekiah's fault in this particular, conſiſted in the firſt place, in his vanity, that it was not ſo much in compliance with cuſtom in this reſpect, that he ſhewed his ſtores and his treaſures, but to gratify a paſſion, which was his ruling one, to intimate that theſe were the things, from which he would wiſh them to form an idea of his greatneſs and happineſs; and in the next, that he ſet much too high a value upon the compliment they paid him, for that the interpretation, which would naturally be put upon this civility, would be that he was courting their maſter's favor and friendſhip, and longed for ſome cloſer alliance with him; if either of theſe were the principle he acted upon,

[i] Μετα δε ἡμερην τριτην ἡ τεταρτην κελευσαντος Κροισου, τον Σολωνα θεραποντες περιηγον κατα τους θησαυρους, καὶ ἐπεδεικνυσαν παντα ἐοντα μεγαλα τε καὶ ὀλβια. Herod. L. i. p. 11. [k] Vitringa in Eſai.

he was faulty in a very high degree, becauſe both concurred in ſhaking off all dependance upon God both from him and his people; and yet that they were ſo, is pretty plain, becauſe no ſooner does the hiſtorian give the character of him, that *Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up*, but we are told, that therefore, *there was wrath upon him and upon Judah and upon Jeruſalem*[l].

But this there could not be, conſiſtently with any notions of God's juſtice, if his ſubjects had not ſhared with him in the crime, which in fact they did moſt abundantly; their late miraculous eſcape from Sennacherib king of Aſſyria, had had it is plain, no other effect upon either him or them, than to flatter their vanity, and tempted them to think that nothing henceforward could ſhake them: and therefore the prophet ſuited his remedy with great exactneſs, to their diſtemper, and as they and their prince were ſo fond of the eſteem and friendſhip of the Babylonian, into the hands of the Babylonian he conſigns them; then and not till then, Hezekiah and his people began *to humble themſelves for the pride of his heart, he and all the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, ſo that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah*[m].

Hezekiah then was we ſee, the occaſion, but not the cauſe of this dreadful prediction of the prophet's: it was the vanity and corruption of the people, that brought upon them their captivity, but it was the particular circumſtances of their prince that the prophet laid hold upon, to introduce his declaration of it. Upon the circumſtances of this prince, has the author of the book of Job laid hold too, to introduce his allegory, and at the very period this prophecy was to take place, his poem opens.

The kingdom of Iſrael was now loſt and gone, that of Judah was manifeſtly in its decline, and haſtning apace to ruin; could wealth or numbers have ſupported it, it had hitherto nothing to fear, but it had an inward decay, that ſurpaſſed the powers of medicine, which though they might protract a while its being, could not prevent its diſſolution. In this reſpect, Hezekiah was the very emblem of it, ſick to death, and reſpited but a while from the jaws of it; rich and wealthy as they, and full as vain and conceited; his ſubſtance conſiſted we ſhall find, of much the ſame materials with Job's, *he had ſtorehouſes for the increaſe of corn, and wine*

[l] 2 Chr. xxxii. 25. [m] Ib. 26.

and

and oil, and ſtalls for all manner of beaſts, and cotes for flocks: moreover he provided him cities, and poſſeſſions of flocks and herds in abundance, for God had given him ſubſtance very much[m].

This is the account the ſacred hiſtorian gives of his poſſeſſions, and is very conſiſtent not only with the poſſeſſions of princes in thoſe days, but with the idea of the great improvements, which the tribe of Judah in particular, had made in agriculture, for ſo Joſephus ſpeaks of them as early as in the reign of Solomon, that æra of their regal glory. " At this time ſaies he, the affairs of the Hebrews were moſt marvellouſly increaſed, and the tribe of Judah's more particularly, the people being turned intirely to agriculture: for enjoying a profound tranquillity, and neither engaged in foreign, nor diſtracted by inteſtin wars, and moreover enjoying all the liberty they could wiſh for, they applied themſelves wholely to this one point, every one to improve what he had to the utmoſt[n]; " ſo cloſely has our author copied his original, in this idea of Job's ſubſtance.

What makes me the more particular in this matter is, that it has been conceived I know not how, a very ſtrong preſumption in favor of the high antiquity of this book, both by Dr. Burnet and others, that the eſtimate of Job's ſubſtance, is taken from the numbers of his camels and his ſheep and oxen, juſt as the ſubſtance of the antient patriarchs, Abraham's, Lot's, Laban's, Iſaac's and Jacob's were wont to be. They that can content themſelves with ſuch ſlender preſumptions as theſe, would do well to look a little farther down into their bibles, than the book of Geneſis, and ſee whether this was not the caſe much later than thoſe patriarchal times; for what think we, was the ſubſtance of the Simeonites, the Reubenites, and the Hagarens; what were the poſſeſſions of Nabal, of Saul, of David and of Solomon? Are we not told of princes, ſo low as the reign of Hezekiah, that did the very ſame thing the Sabeans did to Job, *ſmite the tents* of a bordering people, and drive them from their antient ſeats, for no other reaſon, but *becauſe there was paſture for their flocks*[o]?

Indeed of what elſe, could the riches of a country, ſo fertile as Judea conſiſt, or the riches of any country before the mercantile or the mechanic arts took place? theſe were as Diodorus Siculus calls them, the

[m] 2 Chr. xxxii. 28.

[n] Θαυμαστην δ' επιδοσιν ἐλαβεν ὁ τε των Ἑβραιων λαος, καὶ μαλιστα ἡ Ἰουδα φυλη, προς γεωργιαν τραπεντων, καὶ την της γης ἐπιμελειαν. Εἰρηνην γαρ ἀπολαυοντες, καὶ πολεμιοις καὶ ταραχαις μη περισπωμενοι, καὶ προσετι της ποθεινοτατης ἐλευθεριας ἀκραιως ἐμφορουμενοι προς το συναυξειν, ἑκαστος τα οἰκεια καὶ ποσιν ἀξια πλειονος ὑπηρχεν. Joſ. Ant. L. viii. c. 2. [o] 1 Chr. iv. 40.

βασιλικα κ]ηνη, the royal poſſeſſions of old; and Virgil in the character of old Galeſus, gives much the ſame account of him, with that of Job in the paſſage ſo ingeniouſly commented upon.

——*juſtiſſimus unus*
Qui fuit, Auſoniiſque olim ditiſſimus arvis;
Quinque greges illi balantum, quina redibant
Armenta, & terram centum vertebat aratris[q].

The beſt old man, and richeſt of the field;
His lands a hundred yoke of oxen till'd.
Five herds, five bleating flocks his paſtures fill'd.

The conjecture were juſt as ingenious to ſuppoſe the book of Job written in the reign of Auguſtus Cæſar, or at the time of the Trojan war, becauſe both Homer and Virgil deſcribe their princes with theſe poſſeſſions, as in the patriarchal age, becauſe their wealth conſiſted of herds and flocks; there is no neceſſity to have recourſe to either, when we have both a people and a prince too ſo very remarkable for their ſubſtance of this kind; the tribe of Judah we have ſeen, excelled in it, and Hezekiah who we ſay was its type in every reſpect, is mentioned with this very diſtinction.

To return therefore to what has been already hinted at, the anniverſary feaſts in the book before us; of this good king it ſtands recorded, as one of the greateſt actions of his life, that no ſooner was that impious predeceſſor of his, his father dead, than he ſet himſelf with all his might to a thorough reformation of his kingdom both in church and ſtate; the houſe of God had been long ſhut up, and this had been attended as it naturally would be, with a total diſcontinuance of all the ſervices of religion, with the neglect of purification in the prieſts, and with a general and a moſt abandoned remiſſneſs in the people: the daily worſhip of God had been wholly laid aſide, and the daily ſacrifice, that was expreſly inſtituted for a ſin offering, not neglected only but utterly forgotten.

Here then their good king began, where indeed all reformation muſt begin, in bringing them firſt back to a ſenſe of God, in order to bring them back more effectually to a ſenſe of themſelves: his firſt care therefore was to open the doors of the temple, and his next

[q] Virg. Æn. vii. 538.

to

to ſanctify it: he ſummones therefore all the prieſts and Levites to perform their reſpective ſervices upon this occaſion, and the moment they had prepared the temple, he ſends a ſolemn meſſage to all the rulers of the city to attend him, and *then Hezekiah the king roſe early and gathered the rulers of the city and went unto the houſe of God, and they brought ſeven bullocks, and ſeven rams, and ſeven lambs, and ſeven he goats, for a ſin-offering for the kingdom and for Judah: and he commanded the prieſts the ſons of Aaron, to offer them on the altar of the Lord*[r].

Two laws there were in the books of Moſes, requiring a ſacrifice for the ſins of the whole people, when they were fallen into error: by the firſt, a bullock was to be offered in ſacrifice, when the whole congregation had done ſomething contrary to their law, but yet had not forſaken their religion; by the ſecond, a goat was to be added to the bullock, when they had acted contrary to their religion and were fallen at the ſame time into the practice of external rites: the bullock was offered for a burnt-offering in token that they owned no other God but the Lord nor any other religion but Moſes's: the goat for a ſin-offering to expiate the guilt contracted by having acted contrary to their religion; both theſe their good king offered, and upon this occaſion increaſed not their number only, but made a farther addition of other ſacrifices, conceiving probably that the extraordinarineſs of the occaſion would well juſtify the addition, and that ſuch a complicated ſcene of guilt could not be expiated but by increaſing both the quantity and the quality of the ſacrifices[f].

Here we have the ſacrifices that Job offered, in their original *ſtamina*, almoſt indeed in the ſame words, for *he roſe up early in the morning, and ſent and ſanctified his ſons, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all*; obſerve the reaſon of all this ſolemnity, *it may be, my ſons have ſinned and curſed God in their hearts*[t], the very reaſon that put Hezekiah upon ſending for the rulers of the city the prieſts and the Levites, to go up unto the houſe of God, *to offer the ſin-offering for the kingdom and for Judah upon the altar of God*. See here a ſpectacle, which angels might look down upon with reverence, and God himſelf ſurvey with compaſſion; the whole congregation of Judah, with their rulers and their elders at the head

[r] 2 Chr. xxix. [f] Patr. Com. in loc. [t] Ch. i. 5.

of

of them, proſtrate before the mercy ſeat of God; and one of the greateſt monarchs in the world, humbled for the ſins of his people, confeſſing their ſins and deprecating God's vengeance!

A reign thus opened with ſo ſolemn an act of national humiliation might fairly promiſe its-ſelf all the ſucceſs it had in reforming the other abuſes that had crept into that kingdom; among the reſt, the neglect of the three great annual feaſts had been a moſt flagrant one: having taken counſel therefore with the chief prieſts and the princes and all the congregation in Jeruſalem, he iſſues forth immediately his royal precept, that on the fourteenth day of the ſecond month, the paſſover ſhould be kept at Jeruſalem, and that too by the whole congregation of Iſrael as well as of Judah: for there yet remained without queſtion many families, that had eſcaped the aſſyrian captivity, out of all the ten tribes, and were diſperſed throughout the country: he ſent therefore meſſengers to carry notice of the approaching paſſover throughout the whole of it, and invited all that were of Iſrael, and Joſiah did the ſame, to appear at the feaſt, and great was the concourſe aſſembled, as well from the tribes that had ſeparated from the houſe of David, as from thoſe that ſtuck to it.

Obſerve how minutely the ſtory is told; letters are written to all the ten tribes to come up to Jeruſalem to celebrate the paſſover [u]; proclamation is made from Dan to Beerſheba [w], i. e. from one end of the country to the other, of the approach of this ſolemn feaſt-day; the poſts are diſpatched with the letters from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manaſſeh even unto Zebulun [x]; ſome out of every tribe appear at the feaſt, notwithſtanding the jeſt they made at firſt of Hezekiah's invitation; and in concluſion, there was great joy, ſuch as there had not been the like in Jeruſalem, from the time of Solomon the ſon of David, king of Iſrael [y]. Put now all theſe circumſtances together; Job a good man, one that feared God and eſchewed evil, Hezekiah a good king, one that truſted in the Lord God of Iſrael; the ſons of Job feaſting ſeven days, the people of Iſrael keeping the paſſover ſeven days; the ſons of Job calling for their three ſiſters to eat and to drink with them, Hezekiah inviting the revolted tribes to do the ſame; Job riſing early in the morning and ſending and ſanctifying his ſons, and offering burnt-offerings for them, Hezekiah the king riſing early too and offering the ſin-offering for all Iſrael and for Judah; the feaſts in Job kept with that

[u] 2 Chr. xxx. 1. [w] ℣ 5. [x] ℣ 10. [y] ℣ 13.

prodigious mirth and jollity, that introduced a ſuſpicion of their having been tranſported into ſome exceſs and debauch, Hezekiah's paſſover celebrated with all that extravagance of joy, that had not been known of ſo many hundred years; put I ſay, all theſe circumſtances together, and ſee if ſuch a variety ever tallied ſo exactly.

Yet here it muſt be confeſſed, is a moſt inveterate ſore among all the commentators, which calls for the hand of the moſt able critick in the oriental language, and though it has long been tampered with, never had juſtice done it, till a very expert maſter whoſe talents no reader will doubt, undertook it. *It may be that my ſons have ſinned and* curſed *God in their hearts.* The word BARAC, here tranſlated *curſe*, in the primary and ſtrict ſenſe of the original, ſignifies *bleſs*, and yet we cannot help obſerving, that in ſuch a ſenſe it is not to be taken in this paſſage, but in a ſenſe the very reverſe of it, or elſe there were no need of ſacrifices to attone for it. The account that the learned author gives of this difficulty, is the moſt plain and ſimple that can be, at the ſame time that it is the moſt agreeable to the idiom of the hebrew tongue, and indeed to the analogy of almoſt all languages; by *bleſſing* therefore in a more looſe and popular ſenſe of the word, "is meant *taking leave of*, or *bidding adieu* either to perſons or things, which we chooſe to have no more concern with; and when this expreſſion is applied, as it is here, to God, the meaning is that they have *bid adieu* to God, and given up all regard to his ſervice and worſhip, have *ſhook hands* with the very God that made them, and *taken leave* of every thing ſerious and ſacred [a]."

I chooſe to tranſlate the learned author's words by phraſes of ſpeech ſtrictly ſimilar in our own language, that the reader may ſee that this is a figure of ſpeech, neither ſo very extraordinary, nor yet ſo peculiar to the eaſtern nations, as is generally imagined: indeed it is common to moſt languages, the Greeks have their XAIPEIN [b], and the Latins their VALE [c], as well as the Hebrew its BARAC, and our own its GOD BE WITH YOU! all theſe expreſſions are equivocal, and uſed

[a] *Berec*, benedicere, uſurpari amat pro valedicere alicui; hinc porro gradus factus ad uſum hunc ſecundarium, κατ' ευφημιαν, quo valere jubemus ea quæ rejicimus, ſeponimus, amandamus, parum curamus: notione vel intenſâ vel remiſſâ pro variis circumſtantiis, *valedixerint numini*, eleganter ergo poſitum pro deflexerint a reverentiâ ejus, miſſam fecerint exactam ejus legis obſervantiam. Grey in loc. [b] Χαιρειτω βελληματα. Eurip. Med. Χαιρει δ' μονον φιλοφροσυνης ην συμβολον, αλλα κ᾽ απεχθειας κ᾽ τω μηκιτι χρησιθαι αλληλοις. Lucian. Tom. I. p. 496. [c] Valeant, qui inter nos diſſidium volunt. Ter. Act. iv. ſc. 2.

occa-

occaſionally for either curſing or bleſſing. As the words ſtand in the paſſage under conſideration, they may be beſt perhaps explained by a parallel expreſſion in the ſame book, *I had denied the Lord* [d], and ſo be equivalent to that ſuggeſtion of Agur's, *leſt I deny thee and ſay who is the Lord?* the very caſe of the Jews at the time we are ſpeaking of, for *your fathers*, ſays Hezekiah, *have treſpaſſed and done evil in the ſight of the Lord, and turned their faces away from the habitation of the Lord and turned their face backward* [e].

I ſuſpect I own, that this antiphraſis is of a date much later than moſt writers upon this book are diſpoſed to allow it: for to *curſe God*, in the language of Moſes, is KALAL ELOHIM; but the author of *the ſecond book of Kings* introduces two ſons of Belial bearing witneſs againſt Naboth the Jezreelite, becauſe BERACTA ELOHIM *thou didſt* bleſs, or as it is rightly tranſlated, *blaſpheme God and the king* [f]; now there can no doubt at all be made about the nature of the crime becauſe of the nature of its puniſhment, for *they carried him out of the city, and ſtoned him with ſtones that he died*, the very puniſhment aſſigned by the levitical law for blaſphemy. It may be queſtioned if this word be uſed by any writer for *curſe* before the Babyloniſh captivity: there are many reaſons to believe that *the books of Kings* were written by Ezra, all the reaſon in the world to believe they could not be written before the captivity, when the hebrew language as well as their manners, originally pure and natural, and exactly conformable to the primitive ſimplicity of the patriarchs, had undergone an univerſal change, and their words once plain and ſimple, derived from a ſmall number of roots, grew corrupted, as it is notorious they did, with the chaldee, ſyriac, arabic and other languages.

Be that as it may, e'er this it is probable that theſe ſame feaſts were neither of patriarchal nor of pagan origin, notwithſtanding all that the commentators have advanced to prove them ſo: and I muſt freely own, that it was this very circumſtance in Job's ſtory, that firſt put me upon this enquiry, and the ſucceſs of it more than anſwering my expectation, tempted me to try the ſame experiment upon the reſt of this performance, concluding all along, that if what followed ſhould turn out to have the ſame jewiſh aſpect, which I have long ſuſpected it had, there could then remain but little doubt of the allegory.

[d] Ch. xxxi. 28. [e] Prov. xxx. 9. 2 Chr. xxix. 6. [f] 1 Kings xxi. 10.

What led me into this train of thinking was the two capital figures in this piece, a feaſt and a ſacrifice: I had learnt from Joſephus and the bible too, that not one of the jewiſh feaſts concluded without a burnt offering [g]: and therefore all that commentators had labored to ſhift them off to either birth-day feaſts [h], or to what was indeed more plauſible but equally unſatisfactory, ſome patriarchal ſacrifices, had but little weight with me, ſo long as the grand knot remained unlooſed of *the ſeven ſons feaſting every one his day*; not that I had any particular ſuperſtition for the odd number, but becauſe I ſaw plainly that here muſt be the clue, that was to lead through this labyrinth, and if no rational account was to be had of the ſeven ſons, it would be of little conſequence to be at farther pains in the enquiry after either the feaſts or the ſacrifice.

For the pagan world had this cuſtom in common with the people of God, they feaſted and they ſacrificed, and were there not what there always is throughout this whole poem, ſome capital diſtinction to fix their meaning, the ſcholiaſt upon a paſſage in Ariſtophanes would tempt one almoſt to believe theſe ſacrifices to have been pagan, when he informs us, that there were ſent to the grand feaſt of the Panathenæa, bullocks from every colony, *according to the number of them all*, to be ſacrificed [i]. Beſides their public feaſts the antients had too their city and company feaſts called APATURIA, and ſome family feaſts to which none but kinſmen were invited; ſome ſuch feaſts too they had among the Jews, as appears from that excuſe which David left Jonathan to make for him to Saul, for not ſitting with him at the feaſt of the new moon: *if my father at all miſs me, ſay David earneſtly aſked leave of me, that he might run to Bethlehem his city, for there is a yearly ſacrifice for all the family* [k].

Were there not I ſay, ſome very particular mark of diſtinction to appropriate theſe feaſts, they might chance to paſs as indeed they have thus far done, for ordinary ones either hebrew or pagan, as they beſt ſuited the reader's purpoſe; it has been the not attending to the ceremonial of the jewiſh feaſts that has produced all the confuſion, and opened a door to all the miſtakes that have happened about them, for if we look but into that, we ſhall find that the number of days, which their feaſts laſted, correſponds exactly with the num-

[g] Ἔστι δὲ ἑβδόμια τῶν ἑορτῶν καθ' ἣν οὐκ ὁλοκαυτωσιν. Joſ. Ant. L. iii. c. 10.

[h] Schultens in loc.

[i] Ἐν τοις Παναθηναιοις πασαι πολεις αἱ ἀπο των Ἀθηνων ἀποικισθεισαι βοῦν θυσομενον ἐπεμπον. Ariſt. Nub. Act. I. ſc 4. ſchol.

[k] 1 Sam. xx. 6.

ber

ber of Job's ſons, and the days of their feaſting, that the two great anniverſary feaſts of the Jews, the paſſover and the feaſt of tabernacles, were by expreſs command of God himſelf, to continue ſeven days[l], and on the laſt day of the feaſt called by St. John the great day[m], there was to be an holy convocation; and were the practice of the later Jews any comment upon the old ceremonial, it might be remarked in ſupport of this ſolution, that the german Jews at this day after theſe two feaſts, obſerve a public faſt, the reaſon of which is exactly the ſame, and it is for that that I produce it, which is here ſuggeſted for Job's burnt-offerings, leſt they might have offended God during the continuance of them[n].

And this in fact, had long been the caſe with all their feaſts before their captivity: their prophets are all of them, loud and bitter in their reproofs of the enormous exceſſes they had got to upon theſe occaſions: all was now riot and debauch, which had been originaly, decent mirth only and feſtivity, and therefore God's wrath and indignation is denounced againſt them on this very ſcore. *Wo unto them that riſe up early in the morning to follow ſtrong drink, and continue till night till wine inflame them: and the harp and the viol, and the tabret and pipe are in their feaſts, but they regard not the works of the Lord, nor conſider the operations of his hands*[o]. Nay their very ſolemn feſtivals had ſhared the ſame fate, and undergone corruptions not fit to be mentioned; *your new-moons and your ſabbaths, the calling of aſſemblies I cannot away with, it is iniquity, even your ſolemn meetings*[p].

Still lower down, we find them dwindling by degrees, into all the folly and foppery of the moſt abandoned heathen revels, inſomuch that in Plutarch's time, the feaſts of tabernacles paſſed, as both he and Tacitus mention, for the feaſts of Bacchus[q]; and when thoſe very feſtivals, which God had inſtituted for ſo many memorials of ſome of the moſt ſignal bleſſings, that he had vouchſafed that people, were coming to ſuch a paſs as this, it was high time for the prophet to call as he does, upon them to ſanctify them; *waſh ye,*

[l] Numb. xxi. 16. [m] Joh. vii. 37. [n] Les Allemans aprés les fêtes de Pâque & des Tabernacles ont accoutumez de jeuner trois jours: et cela fondée ſur ce que les fêtes précedentes ayant eté longues des huites jours, ils peuvent pendant ce temps là avoir offensè Dieu. Calmet. [o] Iſ. v. 12.

[p] Iſ. i. 13.

[q] Τῆς μεγίστης καὶ τελειοτάτης ἑορτῆς παρ' Ἰουδαίοις ὁ καιρὸς ἐστι καὶ ὁ τροπὸς Διονυσω προσηκων. τὴν γαρ λεγομενην νηστειαν ἀχμαζουσι τρυφῇλω τραπεζας προλιθινται παυλοδαπης ὀπωρας, ὑπο σκηναις καὶ

ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings before mine eyes, ceaſe to do evil, learn to do good[r].

Could we give no other account of the feaſts and ſacrifices in Job, than what might be drawn from the exceſſes run into at theſe feaſts, and the neceſſity there was of making ſome attonement for them, the ſolution were much more probable, conſidering the confeſſed reſemblance they bear to the jewiſh ritual, than that which has recourſe to patriarchal practice, which firſt ſuppoſes the very point in queſtion, that older than the ritual law the book muſt be, and then to accommodate the ſacrifices to ſo early a date, is obliged to ſhelter itſelf under the patriarchal diſpenſation.

But how dark ſoever this alluſion may ſeem at firſt ſight, I cannot help thinking, that upon a review of what has been offered on this head, the attentive reader will be led to entertain the ſame ſentiments of it, and to conclude, that with all theſe traces of jewiſh manners about it, ſome one or other of their great feſtivals muſt be ſhadowed under it; and if we this clue in hand, he attend but cloſely to the economy of the whole poem, of which I hope to furniſh him with ſome tolerable notion in the following ſheets, I ſhall have little doubt of his concurring with me at laſt, in that grand paſſover of Hezekiah's being the very ſubject of it.

And what an high idea muſt this give us both of the performance its-ſelf and of its author? What a maſter-piece of allegoric ſkill is there here exhibited? at one ſingle ſtroke, and under one ſober image of a religious family, has he hit off no leſs a people than the twelve tribes of Iſrael; under covert of the ſeven ſons of Job, he has artfully concealed the preciſe number of the days, the jewiſh feſtivals always laſted; and the number of the tribes preſent at the feaſt under the ſeven ſons and three daughters. The three tribes carried away captive by Salmanezer, are the three daughters, and the ſeven tribes carried away by Tiglath-pelezzer, the ſeven ſons: Judah is the father, ſo ſolicitous to ſanctify them, and the ten revolted tribes are the children: they the gueſts, and he the maſter of the feaſt; the two remaining tribes were, long before this event, ſwallowed up in Judah.

καθιασιν ἐκ κλιμαίων μαλιϛα καὶ κιϛῷ διεπεπλεγμεναις, καὶ τὴν πρόϊεραν Σκηνὴν ὀνομαζουσιν; ὀλιγοις δὲ ὑϛερον ἡμεραις ἀλλὴν ἑορϛὴν ουκ ἀν δι αἰνιϛμαίων ἀλλ' ἀνϛικρυς Βακχου καλουμενου τελουσιν. Plut. Symp. L. iii. pr. 5. Quia tibiâ tympaniſque concinebant, hederâ vinciebantur, vitiſque aurea in templo reperta, Liberum patrem coli, domitorem orbis quidam arbitrati ſunt. Tac. Hiſt. L. v.

[r] Iſ. i. 16.

In

In ſuch a performance we cannot but trace the genuin ſtrokes of a conſummate artiſt in the diſpoſition of his light and ſhade, what is peculiar to the jewiſh economy lies unobſerved, whilſt what was common to both the pagan and jewiſh ceremonial is drawn in full glare; and had the feaſts here mentioned, neither been confined as they plainly are, to ſeven days, nor yet *the burnt-offering in the morning* been ſo particularly deſcribed, they might ſtill continue to paſs as they have long paſſed upon both chriſtian and jewiſh writers, for birth-day feaſts.

Yet there is here a very extraordinary circumſtance, that has given great offence to the criticks upon this incident in Job's ſtory, and that is, the invitation of the three ſiſters to the feaſt: a compliment it ſeems, unknown to the eaſtern people from the earlieſt accounts of them, and at this day looked upon there as one of the effeminate indulgencies of the european nations, and ſo many infringements of that law of nature, which aſſigns to man the pre-eminence; for there the huſband enjoys himſelf in luxury and idleneſs, and the wife and daughters are taken up in domeſtic engagements, but ſeldom admitted into his preſence, never partake with him in his entertainments[r].

Gaſpar Sanctius in his commentary on Job[s], has expreſſed his ſurprize at this piece of civility more than at all the other occurrencies, and though hampered with the literal interpretation, has not dared to venture upon the allegory; others have labored with great learning, and proportionable ſucceſs, to decypher the names of the three daughters, Ketſia, Jemimah and Keran-happuch, and great and curious is the profuſion of cabbaliſtic ſkill upon this occaſion; both the Spanheims have beſtowed many pages upon this ſubject, and the world may very ſafely wait the reſolution of the problem from the *new verſion of Job*, ſhortly to be offered to the publick, which profeſſes to be made independent of any tranſlation, critick or commentator, and conſiders the Hebrew as a real CYPHER[t].

But is it to be conceived that in a work of imagination like this, the poet was likely to confine himſelf to little hiſtoric niceities, and not now and then to launch out into a deſcription of manners and

[r] Shaw's travels, p. 303.

[s] Il paroît étonnant que les filles de Job allâſſent manger chez leur frêres: parceque ce ne'ſt pas la coutume parmi preſque toutes les nations, on il y a quelque civilitè, & quelque honêteté, que les femmes aillent a des repas, ou ſe trouvent des hommes. Bibl. choiſie. Tom. xxiv. Art. 1.

[t] Propoſals for printing the book of Job, decyphered into Engliſh, A. D. 1743.

cuſtoms

cuſtoms in uſe among other nations, the more artfully to conceal thoſe of his own? It is ſufficient to all the intents and purpoſes of his allegory, that the likeneſs be preſerved in all the greater lines; for had every feature in this family-piece been charged to the truth, we might have known indeed, but we ſhould hardly have admired the picture: it had been too coarſe a reſemblance to be miſtaken, but we ſhould ſcarce have allowed the drawer any great ſhare of ſkill, and much leſs any delicacy in his coloring.

In truth ſuch puny difficulties concern the drapery only, and have nought to do with either the juſtice or proportion of the figure; the hero of the poem might appear in the dreſs of ſome other nation, and yet be the very perſon he ſet out at firſt: nor muſt we be ſurprized to find him in a very different garb in the court of Nebuchadnezzar at Babylon, from what we beheld him in at Jeruſalem: here all was plainneſs and ſimplicity, their feaſts begun and ended with ſacrifices, and were hallowed with praiſes and thankſgivings, no women to allure them to vice, nor any other temptations to debauch; there all was riot and profuſion, their entertainments protracted to an unreaſonable length, and celebrated in more than all the refinements of Sybaratic luxury.

In the midſt of the revells in the court of Belſhazzar, where was a great feaſt made for no leſs than a thouſand of his lords, we may obſerve this ſeverity of eaſtern manners was diſpenſed with, for there is mention made of his wives and of his concubines being preſent [v]: and if the poet has perhaps confounded this corrupt uſage of the babyloniſh with the more chaſte ones of the primitive hebrew feaſts, it may well be attributed to either the ſituation he found himſelf in at this period, and this again will form a preſumption of the low date of this performance: or to the art and myſtery of the work he was about, in order to keep the true ſtory out of ſight from the leſs obſerving reader.

And here I could have fairly reſted this conjecture; but unfortunately to any credit, I might have arrogated from the ſucceſs of it, the ingenious Dr. Burnet has obſerved upon this very incident, that Job in offering the burnt-offering, acted in contradiction to the law of Moſes [w]; an obſervation which I own alarmed me, after having been in ſo long poſſeſſion of the belief, that burnt-offerings were of the very eſſence of the law of Moſes.

[v] Dan. v. 3. [w] Quod cum vir pius & veri numinis cultor fuerit, legi Moſaicæ contraiverit in ſacrificiis facendis. Burnet. Arch. Phil. p. 265.

Where the contradiction lies is not eaſy to diſtinguiſh from what the learned author has dropt, though by what follows, ſome gueſs is to be made at his meaning, when he ſpeaks of Noah, Abraham and Jethro, all ſacrificing, as prieſts and kings in their own families; his reaſoning goes we ſee, upon the old conceit, that Job ſacrificed, not in right of a levitical prieſt, but in quality of a patriarch, which ſuppoſe we ſhould admit for argument ſake, where lies the contradiction? Noah and Abraham ſacrificed no doubt long before the law in this quality, and ſo did other patriarchs, but yet they are not chargeable with contradicting the law of Moſes: at leaſt the author of the epiſtle to the Hebrews, who has recorded ſome of their ſacrifices, and attributed them to faith, had a very different idea of them. And I am perſuaded, if Job's ſacrificing had the ſame common foundation in faith which theirs had, and which there are not wanting writers to inſinuate, was the caſe too with his [w], ſuch an illuſtrious character had not eſcaped being recorded among the reſt, eſpecially if he lived in an age ſo early as theſe writers have aſſigned him. Other authors of leſs refinement and cooler reaſoning, had taken refuge in the patriarchal ſcheme to account for theſe ſacrifices, but the glory of detecting a contradiction, where there was but a ſimple difference, was an improvement upon all the vulgar rules of logick peculiar to Doctor Burnet.

Dixin' ego in hoc vobis eſſe Atticam elegantiam!

[w] Huc referri debet cultus per ſacrificia, quorum ſane rectum uſum intellexit Job, offerens proculdubio *fide*, ut de Abele enuntiavit apoſtolus. Heb. xi. 4. Fr. Spanh. Hiſt. Job. p. 269.

SECT. III.

BY this time it ſhould ſeem that we have gained as it were, ſome tolerable ground to ſtand upon, for the diſcovery of this alluſion will reflect ſufficient light both backwards and forwards, and from the middle ſituation of the enquirer between the land of Judea and the land of Babylon, he will find himſelf enabled to form a competent judgment of the true drift of this performance; for though the Babyloniſh captivity took not place in fact till the eleventh year of the reign of Zedekiah, a century and a half almoſt after this grand paſſover of Hezekiah's, yet from this prince's reign we have ſeen it is, that the firſt authentic intimations are to be dated of this captivity: plain it is that he had been tampering with the Babylonian, and it is very certain that Manaſſeh his ſon felt the operation of the very prophecy of Iſaiah, having been carried himſelf captive to Babylon by one of the captains of the king of Aſſyria, and though he lived to return again to his crown and kingdom, yet neither he, nor any of his ſucceſſors, enjoyed them any longer in their former glory and independency, but merely as tributary princes to the kings of Babylon, to whom they ſwore fealty and paid homage; and from henceforward nothing elſe enſued but a diſmal ſcene of God's judgments, which even the piety of good Joſiah did but for a while ſuſpend, till at length the whole kingdom of Judah was ſwallowed up in a woful deſtruction.

And how exact a pace has our author kept in this performance with the ſeveral ſtages of the calamities of this republick, the utter ruin and extirpation of which was now determined upon by providence? It opens in the very reign, and at the very extraordinary paſſover of one of their greateſt and beſt princes, and at a period the moſt critical in their whole hiſtory with relation to the cognizance of this grand event; long before this time their deſtruction had been decreed, but not till now was it declared that the Chaldeans were to be the executioners of God's vengeance; misfortunes were crowding thick upon them, and captivity upon captivity in the ſucceeding reigns, till at laſt their city and their temple were

utterly conſumed, and every ſoul that eſcaped the ſword, carried captive to Babylon.

To return then to Job's ſtory. THERE WAS A DAY, *when the ſons of God preſented themſelves before the Lord, and Satan came amongſt them*[w]. Here commences the grand conſpiracy againſt Job, and from henceforward we are to be preſented with a very different face of things: his proſperity was too great, and the care of heaven too viſible upon all his concerns, not to draw upon him the envy of the grand enemy of mankind, and therefore, inſinuating himſelf among *the ſons of God*, into the preſence of the divine majeſty, Satan very artfully ſuggeſts, what indeed was but too true, that there was but little merit in all the reputation that this illuſtrious perſon had arrived at for his piety, for that in truth it was rather the effect of God's ſingular indulgence of him, than of any intrinſic value or worth of his own: that the teſt of a man's ſincerity was by no means his conduct under all the advantageous circumſtances of an affluent fortune, but rather his demeanor under the rubs and preſſures of an indigent one; at leaſt it were an experiment worth the trial, to ſee how his ſervant Job, ſo perfect and upright a man as he had been conceived, would behave upon an inſtant change of all his proſperity, and if even that ſhould not ſucceed, upon the touching him in a part ſtill more ſenſible, his family and perſon.

Such an interview as this between God and Satan was too inviting an one to eſcape the profane wit and raillery of a Tindal[x] and a Chubb[y], it had excited the curioſity of every ſincere enquirer, and it had been ſtrange indeed, had it miſſed of the buffoonery of ſuch cavillers as theſe, who to do them juſtice, have neither been ſparing of their wit or blaſphemy on the occaſion; the diſcuſſion however of this conference the reader muſt wait for till a time and place more proper offer its-ſelf in the courſe of this examination, when I hope to give him ſome ſatisfaction upon this head, and in the mean time ſhall juſt remind him, that the literal ſenſe is what in a work like this, he is at leaſt under no neceſſity of contending for.

For whatever the difficulty may be in accounting for ſuch a conference, yet the moral is good and conſiſtent with all the rules of decorum, as it tends to ſhew God's ſupremacy over all his creatures: that

[w] Ch. i. 6.
[x] Chriſtianity as old as the creation, p. 253.
[y] Chubb's Tracts, Diſ. iv. p. 54.

though for reaſons beſt known to himſelf, he may ſometimes withdraw his protection even from good men, and for ends ſuiting his providence, permit the devil to annoy them, yet ſo malevolent a fiend was not to be let looſe upon God's creatures without controul nor indeed without permiſſion, nor ſuffered to proceed one ſtep beyond the commiſſion indulged him. And therefore the orthodox and truly learned author of *Scripture vindicated* " inclines to go in with thoſe who underſtand this paſſage as containing an allegorical kind of repreſentation, or parable: and is of opinion with thoſe who think that this book is of the dramatic kind of ſtructure, relating true hiſtory but curiouſly ſet off in a poetic dreſs, and embelliſhed with many lively decorations, ſuch as are not to be interpreted up to the ſtrictneſs of the letter [z]."

And compare only that ſly inſinuation of Satan's, *doth Job ſerve God for nought? Haſt thou not made an hedge about him and about all that he hath, and about his houſe on every ſide; thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands, and his ſubſtance is increaſed in the land* [a], with a parallel deſcription in Iſaiah, and there will no queſtion remain who it is that is glanced at; for *now* ſays the prophet, *will I ſing to my beloved a ſong touching his vineyard, my well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill, and he fenced it about, and planted it with the choiceſt vines and built a tower in it*; and leſt the Jews ſhould miſtake their own picture, he has put their name at the bottom of it, *the vineyard of the Lord of hoſts is the houſe of Iſrael, and the men of Judah his pleaſant plant* [b]; this ſame vineyard, fair and goodly as it was, was now at length devoted to deſtruction, *the wild boar of the foreſt* was juſt at hand to *root it up, and the wild beaſt of the field ready to devour it.*

Here therefore Satan ſets at work every engine, and having procured the divine permiſſion to try the experiment, to the very ſtretch of all his wicked power, upon Job's ſubſtance, we muſt not be ſurprized if we find him exerciſing it with all the wantonneſs of malice, and with a determined reſolution of making good the point he had engaged for, that he ſhould reduce him inſtantly to ſuch a deſperate condition, that with all his piety, he would *curſe God to his face*. The putting of his ſuggeſtion upon this iſſue, at the ſame time that it made room for a ſecond and a third attack upon him,

[z] Script. vindicated Part. iii. p. 12. [a] Ch. i. 9. [b] Iſai. v. 1.

in

in caſe the firſt had not the promiſed effect, was plainly calculated by the poet to aggravate the diſtreſs, and by aggravating it to raiſe his hero's character: for misfortunes ſupported with fortitude, or ſubmitted to with patience, caſt an additional luſtre upon virtue: ſtript of theſe a character might be amiable indeed but not ſhining, fit enough perhaps for the dry pages of an hiſtorian, but by no means ſuited to the moving deſcriptions of a dramatic writer.

No ſooner then *was Satan gone from the preſence of God*, than we hear of his firſt effort againſt Job; *there was a day, when his ſons and his daughters were eating, and drinking wine in their elder brother's houſe, and there came a meſſenger unto Job and ſaid, the oxen were plowing, and the aſſes feeding beſide them, and the* SABEANS *fell upon them, and took them away, yea they have ſlain the ſervants with the edge of the ſword, and I only am eſcaped to tell thee*[c]. This is exactly ſcenical, the news is brought in by a meſſenger and finds the family at an entertainment: view the ſtory in this light, and there is nothing more in it than a ſimple ſurprize upon an accident unfortunate enough, yet conſidering the ſituation of bordering vales and paſtures, not uncommon; but when cloſe upon the heels of this, comes a ſecond meſſenger, with the ſame bad tidings of the fire from heaven falling upon his ſheep and ſervants and conſuming them, then a third, with the news of a freſh deſcent made upon his camels and the remainder of his ſervants, and to complete the ſtroke, a fourth with the ſad tale of the great wind from the wilderneſs, which had ſmote the four corners of his houſe, and buried his children in the ruins; diſtreſs like this attended with every ſymptom of immediate ruin, was alarming indeed, and ſurveyed in all its circumſtances, to be equalled by none but that of Jeruſalem *in the days of her affliction*.

And there is no great difficulty I am perſuaded, in applying every ſingle incident in theſe calamities of Job to the calamities which befell the Jews at the ſeaſon we contend for; for the deſcent of the Chaldeans is too promiſing a clue to this whole myſtery to be quitted on account of any little rubs, which either the Sabeans, the fire, or the whirlwind may have thrown in the way: we have been always uſed indeed to conſider all theſe as ſo many diſtinct incidents in point both of time and place, and ſo dramatically conſidered, they

[c] Ch. i. 13.

are,

are, and as bearing no relation to any other hiſtory but the perſonal hiſtory of Job, and yet bring them but together to one point, and apply them to this one event, the Babyloniſh captivity, they will turn out only ſo many refined pieces of imagery, with which the poet has diverſified his ſcene, improving all along in beautiful proportion one upon another, and at length working to this grand criſis.

Conſider now the ſituation of Judea bounded as it was, on the north by Phœnicia, on the ſouth by Idumea, on the weſt by the Mediterranean ſea, and on the eaſt by Arabia, and the deſcent of the Sabeans will be none ſuch matter of wonder as it has been generally repreſented: the Arabians were neighbours and borderers upon the Jews, were a people thieviſh and treacherous, making continual incurſions upon the confines of Judea, and almoſt perpetually haraſſing it. Tacitus ſpeaks of their old and inveterate hatred of the Jews[d], and St. Jerom has remarked of them that they were making frequent inroads upon the borders of Paleſtine, and ſuppoſes thoſe thieves among whom the unfortunate traveller fell in his way from Jeruſalem to Jericho, to be a ſquadron of theſe Arabians[e].

And this is the idea of them throughout ſcripture, they are ſpoken of all along as leading a vagabond kind of life, without houſes, cities or any fixed abode, wandring from place to place, and pitching occaſionally their tents for the convenience of paſture for their flocks; but as this could not always furniſh them with a ſupply equal to their demands, they had recourſe to the hoſtile as well as the roving way of life, but then they made war like free-booters and irregulars, and lived upon plunder; it is amazing to conſider a people ſo great and formidable as they were, ſhould be held in ſuch prodigious contempt throughout all the eaſt[f]; nor is it to be accounted for on any other principles than their lawleſs vagrant ſcheme of life, and their being ſo ſhamefully addicted to thieving, that it was as common among the Hebrews to call an Arabian a thief, as to call a merchant a Canaanite, or an aſtronomer a Chaldean, and our tranſlators accordingly render their name indifferently a thief or an Arabian.

[d] Valida ac ſolito inter accolas odio infenſa Judæis Arabum manus, Hiſt. L. v.

[e] Arabum gens latrociniis dedita, uſque hodie incurſat terminos Paleſtinæ, & deſcendentibus a Jeruſalem ad Jericho, &c. Hieron. Com. in Jer. iii. 2.

[f] Amos ix. 7.

Thus

Thus the prophet Iſaiah deſcribing the deſolation of Babylon, in order to complete the idea of its wretchedneſs and ſolitude, concludes with repreſenting it ſo very deſolate, that even *the Arabian ſhould not pitch his tent there, neither ſhould the ſhepherds make their folds there* [g]; another clan of them is mentioned by Ezekiel, as a lewd profligate ſet, and called *the Sabeans from the wilderneſs* [h]; and Jeremiah reproves the whoredom of the Jews by laying before them their proſtituteneſs in this reſpect, and comparing it with the abandoned practice of the Arabian: *ſee where thou haſt not been lien with; in the ways haſt thou ſate for thy lovers, and played the harlot with them, as the Arabian in the wilderneſs* [i].

A lewd, treacherous, vindictive and vagabond people they were beyond all doubt, and if we may credit modern travellers, little reformation has hitherto been made in either their manners or their way of life; the Sultan Amurat attempted the reducing of them into ſome kind of order, and to reform if poſſible, their propenſity to thieving, but it was an undertaking though great and laudable, too great to ſucceed with ſuch a profligate race of men, and the very firſt propoſal he made them to live in towns, was rejected by them, and they preferred their old practice of living at large, and roving wherever they thought proper [k].

To fix indeed the geography of theſe Sabeans, that made this deſcent upon Job, has been always a work of as much difficulty as to fix the Arab himſelf to any ſettled habitation; great have been the pains expended in this ſingle province, and the event of them all has been to take the reader more and more out of ſight of their true country, for ſo long as the land of Uz that firſt meridian, laid undiſcovered, the reſt of courſe, that were to be reckoned from it, muſt be ſubject to proportionable uncertainty.

The inhabitants of the *happy Arabia* they plainly could not be upon any plan, theſe were too rich and civilized a people, and too remote from either Idumea or Judea, to be the bad neighbours they are repreſented, or indeed to have any concern in the tranſaction, ſuppoſing the land of Uz to be ſituate in either of them; in *the defert* or *the ſtony Arabia* therefore, in one or other of them, we muſt ſeek for the Sabeans country, unleſs we take up with that

[g] Iſai. xiii. 20. [h] Ezek. xxiii. [i] Jer. xxv. 23. [k] Bowen's Geog. Vol. II.

expedient

expedient, which Bochart has ſuggeſted, but which rather cuts the knot than looſes it, that " the ſacred writers under the name of Sabeans often comprehend all thoſe four people, who inhabit the whole περιζα of Arabia, beſides the Sabeans properly ſo called."[l]

Let it be obſerved then, that the original word here tranſlated Sabeans, is SHEBAH, and not SEBA or SABA, and therefore in this enquiry, we have nothing to do with the poſterity of SEBA or their country, which has been too much attended to by Bochart and others, and perplexed their ſolutions of this matter; mention is made by Moſes of three SHEBAHS, one or more of whom ſeem to have been founders of one or more Sabean nations: the firſt is SHEBAH the ſon of Raamah, the ſon of Cuſh the ſon of Ham[m]: the ſecond is SHEBAH the ſon of Joktan, the ſon of Salah, the ſon of Arphaxad, the ſon of Shem[n]: the third is SHEBAH the ſon of Jockſhan, the ſon of Abraham by Keturah[o].

Now conſidering that the merchants of Shebah are mentioned by Ezekiel with the merchants of Raamah and Dedan, *occupying the fairs with ſpices and gold and precious ſtones*[p], it is more than probable that the Sabeans deſcended from Raamah, were addicted to merchandize rather than to thievery, and could not therefore be the plunderers of Job; the ſame obſervation holds with regard likewiſe to the Sabeans deſcended from Joktan, who ſeem to have ſettled in the moſt ſouthern parts of the *happy Arabia*, the *regio thurifera*, from whence came the *incenſe of Shebah and ſweet cane from a far country*[q], and they appear to have been rather merchants than free booters; ſo that there remains only the Sabeans the deſcendants of Jockſhan, and the grandchildren of Abraham by Keturah, whoſe poſterity were moſt probably the Sabeans mentioned here in Job, and their habitation was eaſtward from Canaan[r], where Ptolomy places theſe Sabeans, in the *deſert Arabia*[s]: and there both Calmet and Cellarius fix them[t], in the chain of mountains between Chaldea and Judea.

[l] Boch. Phaleg. L. ii. c. 25. [m] Gen. x. 7. [n] x 23. [o] xxv. 3.
[p] Ezek. xxvii. 20. [q] Jer. vi. 20. [r] Gen. xxv. 6.

[s] Vicinos oportet fuiſſe qui tam ſubito invadunt ac diripiunt. Sabei vero prædones haud quaquam ex fælici Arabia, ut perperam multi credunt, advolârunt, ſed ex propinquiori Sabe, quam in Arabiâ deſertâ Ptolomeus ponit. Cellar. Geog. p. 426.

[t] Il y a pluſieurs peuples nommez Sabéens, comme il y a pluſieurs hommes de nom de Saba; ceux dont il eſt parlé ici, etoient, a ce que nous croyons, des deſcendans de Seba, fils d'Abraham et Keturah, qui habitoient dans l'Arabie deſerte. Calmet in loc. Non ergo intelligendi Arabiæ fælicis populi nimium, ut videtur, hinc remoti, ſed poſteri illius Shebæ, nepotis Abrahami, qui Orientem verſus cum cæterâ Keturæ ſobole ivit, hoc eſt in Arabiam deſertam. Cellar. Geog. p. 427.

And here or hereabouts were ſeated the Arabians, the old enemies and invaders of Judea, for early as the reign of Aſa king of Judah, *Zerah the Ethiopian came up againſt him with an hoſt of a thouſand thouſand, and three hundred chariots, unto Mariſhah*[u], *upon the borders of Judah:* and again in the reign of Jehoram, the Arabians that were near the Ethiopians, made a ſecond deſcent upon Judah and broke into the very heart of it, and *carried away all the ſubſtance that was in the king's houſe, and his ſons alſo and his wives, ſo that there was never a ſon left, ſave Jehoaaz the youngeſt of his ſons*[w]. There is one univerſal miſtake runs through all the tranſlations of the word CUSH here rendered *Ethiopians*, excepting only the Targum of Jonathan, which renders it *Cuſhites*; theſe as a learned commentator obſerves, were a people inhabiting the innermoſt parts of Arabia, not far from Nabatea and Negid which was then called Cuſh, and was upon the confines of the territories of Babylon, which was the antient Cuſh, and by which name Arabia, or ſome parts at leaſt of it are frequently underſtood[x]; and the learned Hyde has proved, that in no one place in the whole old teſtament, does Cuſh ſignify Ethiopia, but always either the Babylonian territory or Arabia[y].

Whichſoever of theſe be underſtood by the word makes but little difference in regard either to thoſe Arabians who invaded Aſa and Jehoram, or to thoſe who indeed were the ſame, that continued to be the teizers and perſecutors of Judah, for they afterwards became ſubject to the kingdom of Babylon, not only Aſſyria but Arabia too and Syria being provinces to that vaſt monarchy at the time of the Babyloniſh captivity; for upon the perfidious refuſal of Jehoiakim to pay the ſtipulated tribute to Nebuchadnezzar, he ſent immediate orders to all his lieutenants and governors of provinces in thoſe parts to make immediate war upon Jehoiakim; in conſequence of which the Arabians with all the other conquered provinces, infeſted him with incurſions and invaſions from all quarters, and haraſſed him with depredations on every ſide: and thus they continued to do for three years together, till at length all parties joining together againſt him, they ſhut him up in Jeruſalem, and having firſt taken him pri-

[u] 2 Chr. xiv. 9. [w] xxi. 16. [x] Patr. in loc. [y] Unde factum ut eadem regio aliquando Cuſh, & aliquando Arabia vocetur, cum nomine Cuſh ſemper Arabia vel aliqua ejus pars intelligatur. Nec ullibi in Sacris Bibliis notat Ethiopiam, ſed potius vel Babyloniæ territorium vel Arabiam. Hyde de Rel. Vet. Perſ. p. 37.

ſoner, they carried his ſon captive to Babylon, and along with him, ten thouſand captives [a].

And now ſtrictly ſpeaking, commenced the Babyloniſh captivity, an event not compaſſed at one ſtroke, but brought about by various inſtruments, accompliſhed in different reigns, and conducted to its deſtined period through ſeveral ſucceſſive ſtages. The poet therefore has diſtributed his incidents with exact conformity to theſe events, nor was the utter ruin of Job any more to take place in an inſtant, than the Jews captivity in fact had done: in the detail of his misfortunes, each makes way, and prepares the reader for the ſucceeding one, the grand event is kept all the while at its proper diſtance, and we are gradually and inſenſibly as it were, conducted from the deſcent of the Sabeans to the downfal of Job himſelf, through the intermediate ſtages of the calamities that befel his ſheep, his camels and his children, and the cruel treatment he met with from his wife, till at laſt we behold him a diſmal ſpectacle, in the aſhes. And juſt thus it was with the captivities of the Jews, the two firſt were in the reign of Jehoiakim [b], the third at the end of the reign of Jehoiachin his ſon [c], the fourth took place in the tenth year [d], and the fifth at the end of the reign of Zedekiah [e], the ſixth and laſt happened not till four or five years after the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and then finally, and not till then, *was Judah carried captive out of his own land* [f].

If the more ſevere reader ſhould be here offended at an event ſo very extraordinary as this, and a people ſo great and formidable as the Arabians confeſſedly were, being figured under ſo light an image, all I can ſay is, that this was the imagery of thoſe early times, and what is more to the purpoſe, that it is the very imagery the poets ſets out with in the deſcription of his hero's ſubſtance, and had the Arabians been deſcribed as either a warlike or a diſciplined people, the deſcent they made upon a private man's eſtate, let him be ever ſo great or wealthy, had been an exploit unworthy of them, and had not carried with it even an air of probability.

It has been ſomewhere obſerved to Virgil's honor, that his ſhepherds are always made to ſpeak like ſhepherds, and not like philoſophers, as they ſometimes do in other paſtorals: and it may be re-

[a] Prideaux Conn. Vol. I. p. 53. [b] Jer. xxv. 1. lii. 28. 2 Kings xxiv. 11.
[d] Jer. xxxii. 1. [e] Jer. lii. 13. [f] 2 Kings xxv. 21.

marked to our poet's honor here, that his images are all conſiſtent from the beginning down to the end of both the prologue and the epilogue, never once deviating from the plainneſs and ſimplicity of the paſtoral age; herds and flocks in great abundance were all the wealth of Job, and very great muſt have been the impropriety, if a numerous and a diſciplined army had been brought into the field againſt ſuch a weak defenceleſs ſtate as this; thieves and robbers, free-booters and Arabians were the proper and the moſt natural enemies of ſuch a ſtate.

But happily for our author, he had nature for his guide, and hiſtory for his direction in this deſcription, the Sabean was the very pilfering character he has drawn, and withal the very ſworn and profeſſed enemy of Judah: at the period we are contending for, he was one of the principal harraſſers of this kingdom, and he had long before been the invader of it; nor did his pique and reſentments ſubſide with its ruin and deſolation, but ſhewed its-ſelf again after more than a ſeventy years intermiſſion: for in concert with the Ammonites and Aſhdodites, the Arabian emerges once more in the grand conſpiracy formed againſt the rebuilding of their temple, after the Jews return from their captivity [g], and in that grand expedition of Titus's againſt Jeruſalem, we find him making part of that motley army, with all the rage and hatred natural to his ſituation, and with all the old grudge he had long born to a people too ſevere in their manners, and too formidable in their armies to attract his eſteem [h].

In the concluſion, he had an ample opportunity of gratifying the keeneſt of his reſentments, and it muſt be confeſſed, that he failed not to avail himſelf of it, when in open violation of all laws both of nature and nations, and in direct breach of all publick faith, and of the very articles of capitulations granted the Jews by the Emperor himſelf, he practiſed ſuch brutal ſeverities upon them, as common modeſty and humanity forbid to repeat: and ſo far were they from giving them any quarter, that upon a fooliſh notion of the Syrians, that the very bodies of the Jews were ſtuffed with gold, the Arabians ripped them open alive; to ſuch monſtrous extravagancies did avarice, that inſatiable paſſion of theirs, puſhed forwards by their malice and native ſavageneſs carry them [i].

[g] Neh. iv. 7. [h] Tacit. Hiſt. L. v. [i] Arabum manus, a quibus Judei multa atrocia paſſi ſunt; a Syris in Arabas diffuſa eſt fama, quibus et non minor avaritia et

And thus deep it was but neceſſary for us to enter into the hiſtory and origin of the Arabians, in order to throw ſome light upon the Sabeans, one of the principal agents of Satan in his machinations againſt Job, a people never once ſuſpected to be at the bottom of this ſtory, or if ſuſpected, never hitherto accommodated, with any tolerable certainty or propriety, to Job's ſituation; for if perhaps the Scenite Arab has been ſometimes hit upon, yet with a dexterity natural to him, he has conſtantly made ſhift to ſlip the enquirer, and never had the fortune to be conſidered in any other light than an arrant marauder; and yet we ſee they were a people whoſe manners, feat, and hiſtory correſpond exactly with Job's perſecutors, and if we conſider the ſhare they bore in this renowned event, the Babyloniſh captivity, thevery Sabean we have been enquiring after.

But how true ſoever all this may hold of them, it will ſcarce perhaps be allowed that the Chaldeans will admit of any ſuch denomination as pilferers and freebooters, though this muſt certainly be the claſs we muſt rank them under, upon the firſt view of their deſcent upon Job; *for while the meſſenger was yet ſpeaking, there came another, and ſaid, the Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea and ſlain the ſervants with the edge of the ſword, and I only am eſcaped to tell thee* [k].

The appearance of the Chaldeans at this critical conjuncture, is a circumſtance I apprehend, that decides at once the juſtice of our application of the whole of this diſtreſs to the Babyloniſh captivity: for whatever may prove the difficulty in reconciling the letter of this account to the manners and character of the antient Chaldeans, yet ſo long as there are facts and hiſtory to go upon, and thoſe too the moſt capital facts recorded in any hiſtory, there is no quitting ſo ſure an hold as this, on account of any little diſcouragements which the literal relation may preſent: for it were ſtrange indeed, if an allegorical repreſentation confined its-ſelf to every minuter matter, ſtranger ſtill, if we expect to meet with no art or management in an alluſion ſo highly touched and ſo deeply ſhaded as this.

et ferocitas barbariæ propior immanitati, eo quod farti auro Judei forent, diripiunt quæcunque offenderunt advenientes, contra fas, contra leges deditionis, contra promiſſum Cæſaris, incidunt adhuc viventes, manibus eviſcerant ventris ſecreta, alvum ſcrutantur, & inter ejus manantia purgamenta, aurum requirunt. Hegeſip. de excidio Hieroſ. L. v. c. 24.

[k] Ch. i. 17.

The

The caſe really is much the ſame in this as in the former inſtance; a people great and powerful, the moſt great and powerful in the eaſt, the contenders for univerſal monarchy, and the executioners of God's vengeance upon the Jews, are here concealed under a very plain and ſimple image, ſuitably to the whole conduct of the reſt of this performance, and correſponding exactly with the model of the old world, which its author had plainly adopted for his plan; want of room and paſture for a growing herd was the principal motive to war in thoſe days, ſuch was the ambition of their princes; and being ſtraitened in this reſpect was thought pretence ſufficient for their invading their neighbours with the whole collective body of their ſhepherds and dependants, ſuch was the obedience of their ſubjects. Abraham and Lot compromized it is true, this matter upon fairer terms, yet *there was a ſtrife between their herds-men*, that had like to have produced an open rupture [l]: but the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manaſſeh made war upon the Hagarites and ſeized their cattle, their camels and their ſheep, and ſeated themſelves in their country [m]; and the reaſon given for the Simeonites in the reign of Hezekiah, falling ſo unmercifully upon the country of Ham is expreſsly, becauſe they were ſtraitened for paſture for their herds and flocks at home, and here *they found fat paſture and good, and the land was wide, and quiet and peaceable* [n].

Such too was the land of Judea, *that glory of all lands*, too rich and fertile not to draw upon the poſſeſſors of it the envy of its neighbours: the Chaldean was the nation deſtined by providence for the deſtruction of it long before the Iſraelites poſſeſſed it, and upon the eve of the Jews captivity, their prophets warned them of the advances of this formidable people againſt them.

Moſes had hinted to them what would be their condition upon failure of their obedience at the long run; *the Lord ſhall bring upon thee a nation from far, as ſwift as the eagle that flieth: a nation whoſe tongue thou ſhalt not underſtand: a nation of fierce countenance, which ſhall not regard the perſon of the old, nor ſhew favor to the young: and he ſhall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and of thy land until thou be deſtroyed: he ſhall not leave thee either corn or wine or oil, or the increaſe of thy kine, or flocks of thy ſheep, until he hath deſtroyed*

[l] Gen. xiii. [m] 1 Chr. v. 18. [n] iv. 41.

thee:

thee: and he ſhall beſiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls ſhall come down, wherein thou truſteſt in all the land[o]; and Jeremiah tells them of theſe grand enemies of theirs, that they were a people *that lay hand on bow and ſpear, that are cruel and have no mercy: whoſe voice roareth like the roaring of the ſea, and they ride upon horſes, ſet in array as men of war*[p]; and Ezekiel deſcribes them as *deſireable young men, captains and rulers, great lords and renowned riding on horſes*[q].

Theſe deſcriptions will lead us gradually, and for that reaſon I am the more minute in copying them, to a better acquaintance with the Chaldeans the invaders of Job: they are called in the original, CHASDIM, the proper name of the Babylonian Chaldean, which the LXX tranſlate ἵππεις, *horſe-men*, and they are ſaid to have made out three bands, or formed themſelves into three ſquarons; which agrees we muſt obſerve, with the account of them in the prophets; for the Chaldeans were famous for their cavalry, and in this reſpect they were particularly formidable to the Jews, who were under a great ſcarcity of horſes, and beſides that, an expreſs command not to multiply them[r]. Theſe, as the learned prelate ſo often quoted, has obſerved upon the celebrated deſcription of the horſe in this book, " are repreſented as made on purpoſe for the day of battle, but this courage, this aptneſs for war in them was the very reaſon, why God, who had undertaken their cauſe himſelf, would not ſuffer his people to make uſe of them for their defence[s];" ſo religiouſly obſervant of decorum was the poet, that amongſt all Job's ſubſtance, his ſheep, his oxen and his camels, he has never once mentioned horſes.

Should it be objected, that this but aggravates the difficulty, that the placing as it does, the Chaldean in ſo very high a light, at the ſame time that they appear in ſo diſadvantageous an one in Job, forms a preſumption againſt their being the ſame people, what has been already remarked upon the nature and conduct of this compoſition, muſt be the anſwer to it; not that this people civilized and diſciplined as they were at this period of their monarchy, were in reſpect of their moral character, better than their neighbours; they were the grand oppreſſors and invaders of the liberties of the eaſt: the prophets characterize them as proud, covetous, lewd

[o] Deut. xxviii. 49. [p] Jer. vi. 22. [q] Ez. xxiii. 23. [r] Deut. xvii. 16.
[s] Sherlock's Diſc. Diſſert. iv.

and

and cruel; drunkards they were to a proverb, intoxicated with wine and with ſucceſſes beyond all the bounds of decency and moderation; Habbakuck calls them *a bitter and mighty nation, marching through the breadth of the land to poſſeſs dwelling places that were not theirs, as coming for violence, ſcoffing at kings and ſcorning at princes*[t].

A ſet of Chaldeans there were, as Xenophon informs us, that anſwer this account in Job with great preciſeneſs, "who lived upon plunder, and knew nothing at all of working, nor could they; for they got their bread intirely by war, and were always pilfering, and often in pay, ſometimes with the Indian kings, and ſometimes with Aſtyages: they were looked upon as a moſt valiant race of men in thoſe parts, fought for hire, were very warlike and very poor, their country mountainous, and but a very ſmall part of it had any kind of riches[u]." Theſe mountain Chaldees he places upon the border of Armenia, too far it muſt be owned north, to have ought to do with Judea or any ſhare with the Babylonians at this or any other juncture; but as he is ſingular in placing them there, and ſuſpected of an error in this particular, in his geography, it is more probable, that theſe were the proper Aſſyrians, now ſwallowed up in the vaſt babyloniſh monarchy[w], whom Nahum deſcribes as *full of lies and robbery*[x].

But if as Calmet has remarked, "the Chaldeans, who lived on each ſide the Euphrates, in the neighbourhood of Babylon their capital city, were mixed in fact with the Scenite Arabians, upon whom we have ſeen, they bordered, and that they frequently lived, as the Arabians did, upon plunder[y]," then the buſineſs is done at once, and we need be at no farther pains in fixing either the geography, or in comparing the manners of theſe Chaldeans with the Babylonians; but I ſuſpect very much the learned commentator's authority for this

[t] Hab. i. 5. [u] Εἰσι δε τινες των Χαλδαιων, οἱ ληιζομενοι ζωσι, καὶ οὐδ' ἂν ἐπισαιντο ἐργαζεσθαι, οὐδ' ἂν δυναιντο, ἐιθισμενοι ἀπο πολεμου βιοτευειν, ἀει γαρ ἐληιζοντο, καὶ ἐμισθοφορουν, καὶ πολλακις μεν παρα των Ινδων βασιλει, πολλακις δε παρ' Ἀστυαγει. — πολεμικωτατοι λεγονται των περι την. ἐκεινην χωραν ἐιναι. καὶ μισθω στρατευονται, ὀπτιλαν τις αὐτων δεηται, δια το πολεμικωτατοι καὶ πενητες ἐιναι. καὶ ἡ χωρα αὐτοις ὀρεινη τε ἐστι, καὶ ὀλιγη ἡ τα χρηματα ἐχουσα. Xen. Cyr. Inſt. L. iii. [w] Univ. Hiſt. Fol. p. 907. Query. Might not this mountain-country of the Chaldeans be the *montes Gordiæi*? Or the Καρδυοι ὀρη? which comes nearer ſtill to the Χαλδαιον ὀρος, is in the very place, and is inhabited by free-booters. [x] Nah. iii. 1.

[y] Les Chaldéens demeurent ſur l'un & l' autre bord d' Euphrates, aux environs de Babylone, qui etoit la capitale de leur pays. ils etoient mêlez avec les Arabes Scenites, & pluſieurs vivoit comme eux, de brigandages. Calm. in loc.

fact, as the Chaldeans ſouth of Meſopotamia, whatever they of the north might be, were not under this imputation of being either thieves or free-booters[z].

And if they carry this appearance in the poetical licence of the work under enquiry, I rather think that from ſuch licence we are to account for their appearance, and as there are not wanting large tracts of ground in that country almoſt deſert and uninhabited, laboring under great ſcarcity of water, and where nothing ſcarcely is to be met with but a few roving ſhepherds, who live in tents, and move from place to place for the convenience of food and paſture for their herds[a], the more probable ſolution is, that upon ſome ſuch ſhepherds as theſe the author had his eye in this deſcription, and ſo has characterized their whole nation from a very ſmall part of it, and that the meaneſt and baſeſt: a figure not uncommon among either poets or orators, and ſtrictly conformable to the economy of the whole prologue.

Chaldeans then there were, whoſe conduct and character would both of them, juſtify all that is ſaid of them in this detail of Job's calamities, their hiſtory coincides with it, their ſituation tallies, and their deſcent at this particular ſeaſon puts it beyond all queſtion, that they are the very Chaldeans whom we have been looking for; ſo that the great myſtery of this poem ſeems now to be gradually unfolding, and by the help of ſuch a maſter-key as this, we may hope to proceed with ſome tolerable aſſurance of being let ſtill farther into the ſecret, and though there remain a difficulty or two, to be conſidered in this firſt attack of Satan's upon Job, more formidable at firſt ſight, than either the deſcent of the Chaldeans or of the Sabeans, yet keep but this ſingle event, the Babyloniſh captivity in view, and a very rational account may ſtill be given of both the *whirlwind* and the *fire from heaven*; for while the former meſſenger was yet ſpeaking, there came alſo another and ſaid, *the fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burnt up the ſheep and the ſervants, and conſumed them, and I only am eſcaped to tell thee*[b].

Hitherto the devil had employed only the artillery of a neighbouring kingdom or two againſt him, but now the very elements

[z] Pais de Job etoit ſujet aux brigandages des Chaldéens du nord de Meſopotamie, car les Chaldéens de midi n'etoient nullement brigands. Gaſp. Sanct. in Bibl. choiſ. Tom. xxiv.
[a] Bowen's Geogr. vol. ii. [b] Ch. i. 16.

are called in as auxiliaries, and againſt virtue ſo impregnable as Job's thus far proved, no fire leſs than that of heaven itſelf, was to be pointed.

Ita mihi videntur omnia, mare, terra, cœlum, conſequi
Jam ut opprimar, ut enecer.

With ruin big, each element ſeems ſped
Earth, ſea and air, at this devoted head.

And what was this fire, think we, but that devouring one, the army of the Chaldees? A fire that bore down all before it, and laid the faireſt city, and the nobleſt temple the world ever ſaw, in aſhes; a figure this, highly expreſſive of all the havock and deſolation attending a victorious army, eſpecially when the fire is made to light upon ſome wood or a foreſt, and a favorite figure with all the antient poets.

Ὡς δ ὅτε πυρ ἀϊδηλον ἐν ἀΐξυλῳ ἐμπεσε ὕλῃ
Παλλῃ τ' ειλυφοων ἀνεμῳ φερει, οἱ δε τε θαμνοι
Προρριζοι πιπτουσιν ἐπειγομενοι πυρῳ ὁρμῃ.
Ὡς τ' αρ ὑπ' Ατρειδῃ Αγαμεμνονι πιπτε καρηνα
Τρωων [c].

As when the winds with raging flames conſpire
And o'er the foreſts roll the flood of fire,
In blazing heaps the groves old honors fall
And one refulgent ruin levels all.
Before Atrides rage ſo ſinks the foe
Whole ſquadrons vaniſh, and proud heads lie low.

And under this ſame figure there is painted in Ezekiel this very army of the Chaldees, ſweeping like that in Homer, through the foreſt of the ſouth field, and by the violence of it tearing up the trees and the thickets. *Son of man, ſet thy face towards the ſouth, and drop thy words towards the ſouth, and propheſie againſt the foreſt of the ſouth field, and ſay to the foreſt of the ſouth, be-*

[c] Hom. IL. 11.

hold I will kindle a fire in thee, and it ſhall devour every green tree in thee and every dry tree: the flaming flame ſhall not be quenched, and all faces from the ſouth to the north ſhall be burnt therein, and all fleſh ſhall ſee that I have kindled it; then ſaid I, ah Lord they ſay of me, doth not he ſpeak parables [d]? A parable no doubt it was, and a woful one to the Jews; for who the foreſt of the ſouth field was, and where this fire was to fall, we learn from the very next chapter; *Son of man, ſet thy face towards Jeruſalem, and drop thy word towards the holy places, and propheſy againſt Iſrael and ſay to the land of Iſrael, thus ſaith the Lord, behold I am againſt thee, and will draw forth my ſword out of his ſheath, and will cut from thee the righteous and the wicked.*

Neither was this a parable, exquiſitely beautiful and appoſite as it is, peculiar to this prophet, who abounds indeed in parables: it is the language of the other prophets at this period, and perpetually applied to this one event; thus Iſaiah propheſies the Jews deſtruction, *behold the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots, like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebukes with flames of fire: for by fire and by his ſword ſhall the Lord deal with all fleſh* [e]. And elſewhere, *wickedneſs burneth as the fire, it ſhall devour the bryers and thorns, and ſhall kindle in the thickets of the foreſt, and this ſhall mount up like the lifting of ſmoak* [f].

Jeremiah deſcends to ſtill minuter particulars; for ſpeaking expreſsly of the approaching captivity of Judah, he tells the Jews, *thus ſaith the Lord God of Iſrael: behold I will turn back the weapons of war, that are in your hands, wherewith you fight againſt the king of Babylon, and againſt the Chaldeans, which beſiege you with out upon the walls: and I will aſſemble them in the midſt of the city, and I will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah, and his ſervants, and his people, into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon: and he ſhall ſmite them with the edge of the ſword; he ſhall not ſpare them, neither have pity nor have mercy; for I have ſet my face againſt this city for evil and not for good, ſaith the Lord, it ſhall be given into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he ſhall burn it with fire. And touching the houſe of the king of Judah; I am againſt thee oh inhabitant of the valley, and rock of the plain, ſaith the Lord, which ſaith, who ſhall come down againſt us, or who ſhall enter into our habitation? but I will puniſh*

[d] Ezek. xx. 45. [e] Iſ. lxvi. 15. [f] ix. 18.

you

you according to the fruit of your doing, and I will kindle a fire in the foreſt thereof, and it ſhall devour all things round about it [f].

There is no ſeeing either the truth or the beauty of ſuch a figure without going back to the prophets who have uſed it: and their conſtant application of it to the chaldean army is a confirmation ſtrong and deciſive of our application of it to the event, we have been laboring to eſtabliſh, as the grand object of this whole poem. And if there be in nature any thing more ſtriking and aſtoniſhing, any thing more rapid in its progreſs, or more ruinous in its conſequences than ſuch a fire, it is that which we are next preſented with, a whirlwind, for upon the heels of this, comes a fourth meſſenger and ſays, *thy ſons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their elder brother's houſe, and behold there came a great wind from the wilderneſs, and ſmote the four corners of the houſe, and it fell upon the young men and they are dead* [g].

A ſtrange wind it muſt have been upon the face of this ſtory, and muſt have blown from all the four quarters to ſmite, as we are told it did, the four corners of the houſe; but a little farther attention to ſituations and to facts will competently enough enable us to aſſign the very point that it blew from. Ezekiel we have ſeen, calls the land of Judea the *ſouth-foreſt*, and elſewhere ſpeaks of a *whirlwind from the north* [h]; from this quarter it is, that Jeremiah all along forewarns the Jews, *ſhould come an evil, that ſhould break forth upon all the inhabitants of their land, for lo I will call all the families of the kingdoms of the north, ſaith the Lord, and they ſhall come, and they ſhall ſet every one his throne at the entering of the gates of Jeruſalem, and againſt all the walls thereof round about, and againſt all the cities of Juruſalem* [i]. In ſhort, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon is that whirlwind from the north, whom all the prophets continually threaten the Jews with, as the great ſcourge in the hands of providence upon their rebellions, nor is there ſcarce a prophet, who has ſpoken of this terrible army of his, but ſpeaks of it under this figure, and from this quarter.

Sometimes it is repreſented as a dry parching wind, that blaſts all the fruits of the earth, and withers the leaves of the trees, as *a dry wind of the high places of the wilderneſs* [k], the very wind here in Job, blowing from off the mountains of Chaldea and Arabia; and ſometimes this ſudden ſtroke of God's vengeance is compared, for it is

[f] Jer. xxi. 4. [g] Ch. i. 18. [h] Ezek. i. 4. [i] Jer. i. 14. [k] iv. 11.

but a compariſon, to the inſtantaneous ſhocks of a whirlwind: *behold evil ſhall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind ſhall be raiſed up from the coaſts of the earth, and the ſlain of the Lord ſhall be at that day from one end of the earth unto the other end of the earth; they ſhall not be lamented, neither gathered nor buried, they ſhall be as dung upon the ground*[l]; we can be at no loſs to find where all this havock was deſtined, when the ſame prophet tells us it was *at the holy city, for a whirlwind is gone forth in fury even a grievous whirlwind, it ſhall fall grievouſly upon the head of the wicked*[m].

Bring now all theſe incidents together; the Sabeans falling upon one quarter of Job's eſtate; the Chaldeans upon another; the fire upon the ſheep; and the whirlwind upon his houſe; and that again upon his children; and ſee, if the Babyloniſh captivity, ſuppoſing that to be the ſubject of this allegory, gradually accompliſhed, and executed at length upon the Jews, with the ruin of their temple and the carrying away their people, could poſſibly have been deſcribed more beautifully or indeed more graphically; ſee if that lamentation of Judah, in her captivity, might not with great propriety have been taken up by Job, *behold and ſee if there be any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow, the Lord hath troden under foot all my mighty men in the midſt of me: he hath called an aſſembly to cruſh my young men: my children are deſolate, becauſe the enemy prevailed*[n].

A maſterpiece of allegory this is, and not to be equalled in all the boaſted compoſitions of either Greece or Rome, its uniformity cannot be ſufficiently admired, at the ſame time that ſuch is its variety, that no genius ſhort of the moſt exalted one, could have eſcaped ſome ſlight indecorum in ſo complicated an alluſion; there is one circumſtance very remarkable in this reſpect, and that is, that as the poet had drawn his hero thus far at full length in all the manners of the old world, and inculcated no other idea of his ſubſtance, than barely what the paſtoral life ſuggeſted, he never once ſpeaks of his habitation throughout the whole poem, but as being ſuch an one as was exactly ſuited to that kind of life, he pitches as they did, his tent, and lives in a tabernacle, more ſplendid indeed than ordinary, to preſerve his diſtinction, but ſtill it is but a tabernacle, ſubject as theirs, to all the inclemencies of wind and weather, and overturned at laſt by a ſtrong wind from the wilderneſs; it is called here indeed an houſe, and what elſe were the houſes of thoſe days? and by this

[l] Jer. xxv. 32. [m] xxiii. 19. [n] Lam. i. 12.

time

time the reader ſees the reaſon of its being called ſo, in order to give ſome little opening to what laid hidden under it, the temple, but its ſhape and materials is beſt to be collected from the wind that overſet it.

Lucan has given a deſcription of a houſe and kingdom like this, which may give us a taſte of that kind of antient architecture, and ſome idea too of the havock produced by one of theſe dry winds.

Regna videt pauper Naſamon errantia vento
Diſcuſſaſque domos: volitantque a culmine raptæ,
Detecto Garamante caſæ; non altius ignis
Rapta vehit, quantumque licet conſurgere fumo,
Et violare diem, tantum tenet aera pulvis°.

Gazing the poor inhabitant deſcries
Where high above his land and cottage flies;
Bereft he ſees his loſt poſſeſſions there,
From earth tranſported and now fixt in air.
Not riſing flames attempt a bolder flight
Like ſmoak by riſing flames uplifted, light
The ſands aſcend, and ſtain the heavens with night.

Here concludes Satan's firſt experiment upon this unfortunate hero, thus far unfortunate only in his ſufferings, but adroite enough in his conduct; his flocks and his herds are ſwept off, and his houſe and children deſtroyed, all to gratify the ſpleen and rancour of the devil, and in the ſcenical view, to obviate only a cruel ſuggeſtion of his, that *touch but all that he had*, Job was profane enough to turn ſhort upon God, and with all his ſeeming ſanctity, to *curſe him to his face.*

There was ſome truth however in this ſuggeſtion, or he had been but a very faint repreſentative of the Jew, but matters were not yet prepared enough to ſhew him in ſo diſagreeable a light, as he was ſhortly to appear in; experiment on experiment was to be practiſed upon him, before things came to ſo deſperate an iſſue as this, and e'er Satan had the credit of ſucceeding in the grand point he had engaged for, Job was to have all the merit of worſting him in the interme-

° Lucan Pharſ. L. ix.

diate

diate ſteps to it; his patience was to be firſt raiſed to the higheſt pitch of human fortitude, in order only to ſink him the lower when he ſhould ſwerve from it, and to make his fall the more inglorious, whenever it ſhould take place, his character was to be the moſt exalted.

Now therefore the good old man, proof againſt every calamity, that affected only his ſubſtance, and devoutly reſigned to the will of heaven, ſtood the firſt and ſecond ſhock with the moſt reſpectful ſilence: but touched in ſo tender a part as his family and his children, he gives way at laſt to the relentings of an honeſt heart, and after *rending his mantle, and ſhaving his head, and falling down upon the ground and worſhipping*, for ſo much was only due to external decency [p], he breaks out into thoſe pious breathings, *naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked ſhall I return again: the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the name of the Lord* [q].

As a man, it was not in nature not to feel the affections of common humanity, nor as a father, to be inſenſible to the workings within him upon ſo dreadful a ſtroke as this: but as a great and a good man, he reſtrained as he ought, thoſe affections within their proper bounds, nor ſuffered them to break out into any indecent expreſſions of grief, that might either ſeem to arraign the juſtice, or ſo much as call in queſtion the goodneſs of his maker [r].

This behaviour of his was a downright contradiction to all that the devil had been inſinuating about him, that his virtue was the effect only of his intereſt: his virtue hitherto ſtood firmly fixt, to all appearance, upon a much ſuperior and nobler foundation, and far from receiving ſo great a ſhock, as might have been ſuſpected from ſo unfavorable a repreſentation of it, recoils not, though it does relent at ſo rude an attack made upon him; inſtead of this it barely ſuffers him to indulge a ſhort reflection upon the inſtability of human life, from the experience he had had of it in his own family,

[p] Capillos tonſos aut abraſos luctum funebrem antiquitùs indicâſſe inter Hebræos fidem faciunt multa e ſcriptis divinis facile petenda teſtimonia. Spenc. de leg. Hebr. p. 583.

[q] Ch. i. 21.

[r] Ἐπειδὴ δε ἠκει τις αγγελων ὡς τοις παισι καὶ ταις θυσαιρισιν ἐυωχυμενοις, ἐπεῖναξε πνευμα τι βιαιον το της ἐυφρωσυνης δωμαιον, ὡσε μονον την ἰσθητα διερρηξε, το της φυσεως ἐπιδεικνυμενος συμπαθες, καὶ ὁτι παλιν ἐιη φιλοσοργος ὁις ἐπραττε μαιρυρομενος. πλην καὶ τοῖε ταις λυπαις ὁραν το μετρον ἐπιτιθεις, και ταις ἐυσεβεσιν ἐκειναις φωναις κοσμων το γινομενον ἐλεγεν. ὁ κυριος, &c. μονυχι τοιαυτα βοων ἐκληθην παλιν, ἐφοσον ὁ τυῦο με ποιησας ἐβουλετο χρονον. περιελειν μυ τον ἐκ της γονης σεφανον ἐβουλευσαῦο παλιν, ὑ διαμαχομαι περι των ἰδιων ἀυτυ. St. Baſil. Hom. xxii.

ſome-

ſomething like that moral reflection with which the prologue of Oreſtes concludes upon the wretchedneſs of ſuch a ſituation.

Ἄπορον χρῆμα δυσ-τυχῶν δόμος

The Jews indeed were not, but Hezekiah was the original, from whence the ſacred writer copied all this reſignation, for no ſooner did he receive the dreadful meſſage from the mouth of the prophet, that all that was in his houſe, and that his fathers had laid up in ſtore ſhould be carried to Babylon, and that all the ſons, he ſhould beget, ſhould become eunuchs in that king's palace, than he ſubmitted with all reſignation to God's appointment, and breathed only that ſhort reflection, from a breaſt big with the devouteſt ſentiments of both his maker's juſtice and goodneſs, *Good is the word of the Lord which thou haſt ſpoken* [t].

At the cloſe therefore of this trial the ſacred writer has remarked, that *in all this Job ſinned not, neither charged God fooliſhly* [u]: a circumſtance, which for want of attention to the economy of the whole poem, has been matter of infinite perplexity to criticks and commentators, who inſtead of conſidering it, in the light the author deſigned it, as a caution that this was not likely to be the caſe with his hero long, have dwelt upon it always as a capital proof of his fortitude, and not content with that divine ejaculation of his, *Naked came I out of my mother's womb &c.* have ſought for farther proof of his patience in this remark.

Whereas in truth the caſe is barely this; at the ſame time that ſuch a teſtimony was due thus far to Job's behaviour in his diſtreſs, the nature of the work required, that the reader ſhould ſtill be kept in ſuſpenſe as to the main turning out of his character: for he might demean himſelf, upon a firſt and a ſecond experiment, as he did, with all the fortitude imaginable, ſtill it might fail him at the long run; this at leaſt was poſſible. Such an intimation therefore as this, at the ſame time that it kept the reader in ſuſpenſe, keeps the ſeveral parts of the prologue too, as they relate the ſeveral ſtages of his diſtreſs, diſtinct from each other, and cautions the reader not to make himſelf too ſure, that this vein of piety would run throughout the whole of Job's conduct.

It was not yet time to ſhew his hero in his proper colors, that of courſe would have anticipated the buſineſs of the drama, nor was

[t] Iſai. xxxix. 8. [u] Chap. i. 22.

the

the prologue the proper place for it; all that could be inſerted here, with any propriety, were the incidents preparatory to the opening of the ſcene, ſomething or other that had paſſed in his ſtory neceſſary to be known before he came upon the ſtage, and this was plainly nothing more than Satan's machinations againſt him, upon the good or bad ſucceſs of which was to turn the whole drama.

Here therefore the prologue pauſes a while, and juſt hints the rectitude of Job's conduct upon this one incident; but before a ſecond experiment could be made upon his hero, a ſecond commiſſion was to be procured from God to make it, and this we ſee, is another diſtinct part of the prologue, and is plainly calculated to pave the way to ſtill greater diſtreſs, in the courſe of which if he behaved with the ſame fortitude, he was likely to have the ſame applauſe, and had ſo, for at the concluſion of it, it is ſaid again, that *Job ſinned not with his lips*[w]; a very plain intimation, that thoſe lips of his were ſhortly to become the inſtruments of conveying ſome very different ſentiments from what had hitherto eſcaped them; and indeed notwithſtanding the general opinion of this great man's patience, we ſhall be very much diſappointed, if we expect to find it carried one jot beyond the prologue, for the moment the ſcene opens, we ſhall hear him ſet out with the moſt horrid blaſphemy.

I am aware that a very different account has been given of this matter by the learned author of *the divine legation of Moſes demonſtrated*[x], which is the more ſurpriſing, as he ſets out with ſo accurate a ſkill in the antient drama; he endeavours to ſolve this difficulty by accommodating the moral character of the Jews, at their return from the Babyloniſh captivity, to the teſtimony born in this paſſage to Job, but I cannot help ſuſpecting that it has little or nothing to do with the moral character of either.

My objection to the learned author's reaſoning upon this head is, that it is premature for the drama, for as yet not a ſingle word do we hear of the Lord's turning the captivity of Job, every thing continues in a ſtate of great embarraſs and diſtreſs with him, and his emerging out of them lies at a great diſtance; and beſides the farther attacks to be made upon him by the devil in the procedure of the prologue,

[w] Ch. ii. 10.

[x] This was the very ſtate of the Jews at this time, ſo exactly has the ſacred writer conducted his allegory, they bore their ſtraits and difficulties with temper, till their adverſaries, Sanballat, Tobiah and the Arabians gave them ſo much diſturbance, and then they fell into indecent murmurings againſt God. Div. Leg. Vol. II. p. 537.

there

there is the whole perſecution of him by the three friends to be got through, before his reſtoration takes place, and before the compariſon ſuggeſted between them, can come in iſſue.

The moral character therefore of the Jews at that period, will help but little towards clearing up this part of Job's character, ſuppoſing it to be what I conceive it is not, any part at all of it: if any light is to be had from that quarter, it muſt be looked for, if it keep any pace with Job's, rather from the Jews behaviour upon the approach of their captivity, than after it, and that I am afraid, is not likely to turn out ſo much to their advantage; in the mean time, attend but to the machinery of the poem, and it appears at leaſt to me, that ſome ſuch pauſe as this was nothing more than neceſſary; for what was it that Satan had engaged for, but to bring Job at laſt to downright blaſphemy? How did he make good this engagement? not at all either in the firſt or ſecond attack, but at a third he did the buſineſs: in the former therefore it was but neceſſary to remark how ill the experiment had ſucceeded, not ſo much to applaud Job's fortitude, as to caution us that it was not to be of any very long duration, and to prepare us for a very different face of things whenever he came to appear in his proper character[y].

[y] Inſignis eſt palma hactenus victori tributa, qui ne labiis ſuis, tam proclivibus alias ad peccandum, offenderit; inculcatur quoque aliam, poſt tempus, fore faciem rerum cum ipſo Job, cujus quidem cor conſtantiſſime Deo adhæret, ſed cujus labia tamen non tam religioſe ſemper ſemet continerent, in querelas acerbiores, expoſtulationes, ac provocationes Dei quoque vi dolorum abripienda. Grey in loc.

SECT. IV.

FROM painting and poetry it begins to look, as if we were now coming to downright hiſtory; for henceforward to the end of the prologue, all the diſtreſs turns upon Job's perſon, he is ſmitten with a grievous boil from head to foot, and to aggravate his affliction, hath his wife introduced reproaching him with the ſervile piety of his paſt conduct, and ſpiriting him up to an expedient, which was to coſt him both his life and his innocence; but whatever there may be of nature in the figure, there is ſomething again in the drapery of this picture, that looks ſuſpicious, ſomething in the very appearance of Satan once more in the ſcene, that gives it an air of fiction: and how ſerious ſoever and ſober the whole ſcenic image of Job ſeems, yet ſomewhere behind the curtain I gueſs, it is that we are to look for the original.

Foiled in four ſeveral attempts made upon Job's ſubſtance, and defeated fairly in the great point, Satan had engaged for of reducing him to downright blaſphemy, he had no other reſource left him but a ſecond application to God to enlarge his commiſſion; could this but once be procured, and leave given him to point his artillery upon his perſon, he had no doubt but that virtue which thus far had proved impregnable, muſt at laſt be brought to capitulate.

AGAIN THERE WAS A DAY, *when the ſons of God came to preſent themſelves before the Lord, and Satan came alſo among them to preſent himſelf before the Lord; and the Lord ſaid unto Satan, from whence comeſt thou? and Satan anſwered the Lord and ſaid, from going to and fro in the earth, and wandring up and down in it; and the Lord ſaid unto Satan, haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect man and an upright, one that feareth God and eſcheweth evil? and ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity, although thou movedſt me againſt him to deſtroy him without cauſe. And Satan anſwered the Lord and ſaid, ſkin for ſkin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life; but put forth thine hand now and touch him in his bone and his fleſh, and he will curſe thee to thy face. And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, behold he is in thy hand,* BUT SAVE HIS LIFE.

There is more of human nature and human life in this ſuggeſtion of Satan's, than one is apt to imagine upon the firſt face of it; he had not gone ſo long *too and fro in the earth* without forming a very competent

competent knowledge of the world, and becoming acquainted with all the foibles and all the paſſions of mankind; there is no concluding he well knew, upon either the integrity or the fortitude of a man from an argument ſo very precarious, as his behaviour under a ſtroke or two how ſevere ſoever, upon his fortunes: theſe were too remote from his perſon to reduce a man, of ſuch celebrated patience at leaſt as Job, to deſpair, however apt to alarm his fears; nothing like bodily afflictions to try him in this reſpect, theſe go to the very ſoul, and ſhew of what parts and principles he conſiſts, they bring him acquainted with the condition of his being, and call for all his philoſophy.

Skin for ſkin [u], a proverbial kind of ſpeech, was therefore Satan's argument upon this ſecond interview with God, intimating that ſuch was that ruling paſſion of human nature ſelf-love, that ſave but a man's life, there was no calamity that could befall his fortunes, that he would not ſubmit to, that you might ſtrip him of his very ſkin, and flea him as it were, alive, provided you went no farther, and *touched him not in his fleſh and in his bone:* touch him once but there, and then ſee with what fortitude he would ſtand the trial; this was the higheſt point of religion, and therefore would be the higheſt teſt of his ſincerity, an experiment if he ſtood it, that were deciſive of his virtue, and would convince the whole world that he was the good, the upright, and the patient man he pretended.

In the poet's management of this ſecond conference between God and Satan we may obſerve once more, how ſcrupulous in point of decorum he is, not venturing to engage this evil ſpirit in any exploit, without firſt obtaining the permiſſion of God, nor extending his powers one ſingle jot beyond Job's perſon; his life was an expreſs reſerve in this ſecond commiſſion, and the reader would do well to attend to it, becauſe this reſerve is the very hinge upon which the machinery of the drama will ſhortly turn, and it will prepare him gradually for ſeeing him again one day or other in all his glory, how unpromiſing ſoever may be the appearance. In the mean time there

[u] Ch. I. 1. *Cutis pro Cute*, locutio proverbialis, cujus hæc litteralis eſt vis; paratum eſſe quemvis, ſi vitam modo ſalvam auferre liceat, ut vel cutis ſibi diripiatur, atque, ut ſic dicam, vivus excorietur. ſublimius deinde iſtud *excoriari*, in proverbio noſtro, ſignabit direptionem omnium fortunarum, violentamque amiſſionem. ſane, per *cutim* intelligi fortunas externas, patet ex oppoſitione carnis & oſſium, quæ valetudinem jam, ipſamque adeo vitam deſignant: quaſi diceret Satanas, verbera Jobo admota cutim tantum diſtrinxiſſe, nunc autem, ſi vere victor ſit pronuntiandus, plagas ei ad vitalia eſſe adigendas. Grey. in loc. Ch. ii. 7. Diſſertation ſur la malade de Iob prefixed to Calmet's *Book of Job*.

is one reflection this conference ſuggeſts, and it is a noble and a comfortable one: that whatever evils God, in the courſe of his providence, thinks proper to permit, how wide ſoever the empire of the devil extends its-ſelf, there is a point beyond which it cannot go; that therefore the evils of life are by no means the deſtruction though they be the torments of our being, and that there is a principle ſuperior to them all, faith in God, *that he is, and that he is a rewarder of all them that diligently ſeek him.*

Satan had now all that ſo malevolent a fiend could wiſh for, full powers to handle Job to the utmoſt extent of all his malice, *in his fleſh and in his bones:* and neither diſcouraged by the ill ſucceſs of his paſt attacks, nor at a loſs for freſh materials, he quickly reſolves to hazard all in one grand aſſault to be made upon his perſon; *ſo Satan went forth from the preſence of God,* and the next news we hear of this unfortunate object of his cruelty is, that he had *ſmitten him with ſore boils from the ſole of his foot unto the crown, that Job took him a pot-ſherd to ſcrape himſelf withal, and ſate down among the aſhes:* a wretched ſpectacle!

Other parts of this compoſition have been a prey to the wantonneſs of allegoriſts, or the ſeverity of the verbal critics, but it has been the fate of this to fall into the hands of the phyſicians, who to ſpeak the truth, have done as little honor to Job's virtue, as to their own ſagacity in the accounts they have given of his diſtemper; the fathers had ſwollen the number of his diſeaſes, and St. Chryſyſtom in particular, thought that in his ſingle body he had indured all the afflictions a body was capable of: the phyſicians have increaſed the virulence, at the ſame time that they have varied in the ſymptoms of his caſe; and to ſhew how implicit a faith the Latin church paid them in this reſpect, at this day ſhe invokes St. Job in that infamous diſeaſe, called the Neopolitan, hoſpitals and lazarettoes ſtand dedicated to his name, though the truth is that ſhe had reverenced him as a ſaint, ſome ages before that diſeaſe was known in Europe[a].

If the reader has any farther curioſity to indulge upon this head, he may go to Pineda or to Bartholin, one of whom reckons up twelve, the other no leſs than two and thirty diſeaſes, which are all of them it ſeems, to be gathered from this boil of Job's; Calmet has a ſet diſſertation on the ſubject, to which if I refer him, he will be I believe, in poſſeſſion of all the curious part of learning, antient or modern, which concerns this caſe: but whether after all, he will be one whit the nearer this diſtemper of Job's I very greatly queſtion; all that

[a] Calmet. in loc.

that I agree in with the learned writers is this, that a complication of diſtempers, brought upon him by his own fault, it certainly was, and under ſuch a complication did the jewiſh republick labor we ſhall find, at this criſis of all its affairs, the Babyloniſh captivity.

Perhaps a prophet then will be as ſafe a guide for us in this enquiry as a phyſician, whoſe profeſſion, and the pretenſions it continues to ſupport to learning though I reverence, yet I cannot help thinking that we are under no neceſſity of calling him in to a conſultation upon this caſe, bad as it looks, of Job's: for what is the language of ſcripture with regard to the corrupt ſtate of this people at this period? Is it not the very language in which this malady of Job's is deſcribed? and the diſeaſe the very boil and ulcer here painted? *The whole head is ſick, and the whole heart faint: from the ſole of the foot even unto the head, there is no ſoundneſs, but wounds and bruiſes and putrefying ſores, they have not been wound up, neither mollified with ointment.* And to what does all this relate, but to that deſperate ſtate of things they were now reduced to? *Your country is deſolate, your cities are burnt with fire, your land ſtrangers devour it in your preſence, and it is deſolate as overthrown by ſtrangers; and the daughter of Zion is left, as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers* [w].

It is in ſhort the univerſal language of all the prophets, when they are ſetting forth the judicial proceedings of providence againſt a people for their ſins: theſe they conſider as gathering all along to ſome angry tumor, *filling up* as it were, *the meaſure of their iniquity*, and breaking forth at laſt into an incurable ulcer; the prophets therefore reproach the prieſts with their injudicious as well as their impious treatment of ſuch an ulcer as this, that they *had healed the daughter of God's people ſlightly, crying peace, peace, where there was no peace* [x].

Here they acted as empirics rather than as phyſicians, and ſlightly ſkinned over a wound, that required the lancet rather than a plaſter; for *thus ſaith the Lord, thy bruiſe is incurable, and thy wound grievous: there is none to plead thy cauſe, that thou mayſt be bound up, thou haſt no healing medicines; all thy lovers have forgotten thee, they ſeek thee not, for I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chaſtiſement of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity becauſe thy ſins have increaſed, why crieſt thou becauſe of thine afflic-*

[w] Iſai. Ch. i. [x] Jer. vi. 14.

tion? Thy ſorrow is incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity, becauſe thy ſins were encreaſed, I have done theſe things unto thee[y].

And if this be not that botch, which Moſes threatens the Iſraelites with, in caſe of their diſobedience, it will be extremely hard to ſay what is, conſidering that it is the diſſolution of their ſtate and kingdom, that he ſo plainly hints to them ſhould one day take place, if they hearkened not to the voice of the Lord. *If thou ſhalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to obſerve and to do all which I ſhall command thee this day, the Lord thy God will ſet thee on high above all nations in the earth: and all theſe bleſſings ſhall overtake thee, and come upon thee: bleſſed ſhall thou be in the city, and bleſſed ſhalt thou be in the field. But if thou hearken not unto the voice of the Lord thy God, then ſhall all theſe curſes come upon thee, curſed ſhalt thou be in the city, and curſed ſhalt thou be in the field.*

Obſerve what follows, *the Lord ſhall ſmite thee with a conſumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with extreme burning, and with the ſword and with blaſting, and with milldew, and they ſhall purſue thee till thou periſh. The Lord ſhall ſmite thee with the* BOTCH *of Egypt, and with the emrods, and with ſcabs, and with the itch, whereof thou canſt not be healed. Thy ſons and thy daughters ſhall be given to another people, and thine eyes ſhall fail with looking for them all the day long, and there ſhall be no might in thine hand: the fruit of thy land, and all thy labors ſhall a nation, which thou knoweſt not, eat up, and thou ſhalt be only oppreſſed and cruſhed alway. And the Lord ſhall ſmite thee in the knees and in the legs with a ſore* BOTCH, *that cannot be healed, from the ſole of thy foot unto the top of thy head; and the Lord ſhall bring thee and thy king, which thou ſhalt ſet over thee, unto a nation, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, and thou ſhalt ſerve other Gods, wood and ſtone: and thou ſhalt become an aſtoniſhment and a proverb, and a by-word among all nations, whither the Lord, thy God, ſhall lead thee*[z].

Whatever diſputes there may be among commentators in applying the ſeveral parts of this famous prophecy to the ſeveral calamities, that ſucceſſively befell the Iſraelites from the commencement down to the diſſolution of their republick, no doubt I think, has been made of accounting for this botch and boil from the calamitous circumſtances they were under, upon their being carried captive to Babylon; a grievous ſore moſt certainly there was in their conſtitution

[y] Jer. xxx. 15. [z] Deut. xxviii.

at this period, *their ſins had taken ſuch hold upon them, that they could ſcarce look up*, and that dreadful ſymptom began to appear of *their hearts failing them*; nor was the remedy leſs painful to them than their diſeaſe.

The author of SCHEBET JEHUDAH, quoted by biſhop Patrick, remarks upon this paſſage, that this was the juſt puniſhment of their folly in running after their idols, that they were ſent into another country to worſhip thoſe Gods they were ſo fond of in their own," and he refers the whole of this prophecy to the times of the Babyloniſh captivity. MENASSEH BEN ISRAEL too underſtands it of the ſame, for ſays he, " all the puniſhments denounced in this chapter, from the fifteenth to the forty ninth verſe, were fulfilled either under the firſt temple, or, after the ruin of it, before the building of the ſecond; ſo that it is reaſonable to think this threat of the boil and the botch belongs particularly to what befell the Jews at Babylon. And the learned prelate is of opinion with them both, " that this part of Moſes's ſentence ſeems to have taken place, and to have been literally fulfilled only then when Jehoiakim was carried captive to Babylon, and after him Zedekiah, becauſe when they returned from their captivity, they had no longer any kings[a].

It is needleſs then to look for any particular inſtances, not but we ſhall ſhortly be preſented with one, wherein this infection had operated and come to an head, for if this be the true account of this matter, the captivity was the very boil here ſpoken of, both the diſeaſe and the remedy of the Jews; their whole kingdom was overrun with it, and their ſtate from a lingering conſumption, brought at laſt to utter diſſolution; ſo very juſt is that image of the captive widow in the *Lamentations from above he hath ſent fire into my bones and prevaileth againſt me*[b].

There is an obſervation of Euſtathius's, upon the plague mentioned in the firſt book of Homer, that may reflect ſome light upon this matter; the poet ſays he, at the beginning of this poem takes occaſion from the plague, that happened in the Grecian camp in the tenth year of the ſiege of Troy, to open the ſcene with a moſt beautiful allegory: he ſuppoſes that ſuch afflictions are ſent from heaven for the puniſhment of men's evil actions, and becauſe the ſun was a principal inſtrument of it by the immoderate heats and groſs exhalations, he tells us, that it was ſent to puniſh Agamemnon for deſpiſing that God and injuring that prieſt[c].

——O

[a] Patr. in loc. [b] Lam. i. 13. [c] Pope's Homer. Notes.

——Ὁ γαρ βασιλῃ χολωθεις
Νουσον ἀνα στρατον ὠρσε κακην, ολεκοντο δε λαοι,
Ὁυνεκα τον Χρυσην ἠτιμησ' αρητηρα
Ἀτρειδης

Latona's ſon a dire contagion ſpread,
And heaped the camp with mountains of the dead:
The king of men his reverend prieſt defied,
And for the king's offence the people died.

And is not this the doctrine inculcated in jewiſh as well as heathen philoſophy? The great law-giver of the Jews has laid it down in its full extent, where he enumerates ſo diſtinctly all the many ſore diſtempers, that were to be the infallible conſequences of their diſobedience: and from hence perhaps it was, that it became afterwards a ſtanding opinion among them, that moſt diſeaſes of the acuter kind, were inflicted on men by the agency of evil ſpirits; and with regard to the botch or boil, I believe it may very ſafely be laid down, that it is never once mentioned in ſcripture, as a diſtemper proceeding from any natural cauſe, but always as a judicial viſitation from God, ſent either for the puniſhment or for the prevention of ſin.

What indeed the particular virtues of this diſtemper are, conſidered in either of theſe lights, I pretend not to decide in quality of a phyſician, but plain it is that there is ſome very particular virtue in it, adapted to one of the greateſt and moſt predominant infirmities of human nature, human vanity, and that we never once hear of either the boil or the botch, but as they are addreſſed to this one paſſion: the Jews are threatened with it in caſe their pride got the better of their obedience [e]: the magicians of Egypt, and the Egyptians too, were afflicted with it [f], one, becauſe they were vain enough to diſpute with God the paſſage of the Iſraelites through their country, the other, becauſe they diſputed his ſervant Moſes's commiſſion: Job we ſee, was viſited with this boil, and it had been a wonder indeed if he had eſcaped it, for Hezekiah had it.

Hence then we are to look for ſome ſolution of Job's malady, but here again we are involved afreſh in almoſt as many theories of Hezekiah's, as of Job's malady: ſome of the antient phyſicians

[d] Il. 1. l. 8. [e] Deut. xxviii. [f] Exod. ix. 9.

conceive

conceive it to have been the evil, others an epilepſy: ſome the plague, and others a pleuriſy: Bartolin judges from the cure, that it muſt have been a quinzey, but the moſt probable account of it is, that it was what both the author of the *book of Kings* and Iſaiah call it, *a boil*; there needs I think, no great compaſs of medical ſkill to aſcertain this complaint of Hezekiah's, whatever allegorical talents it may require to ſee the uſe that is made of it in Job; the ſtory as it lies in the *book of Kings*, is plain and intelligible enough, *in thoſe days was Hezekiah ſick unto death, and the prophet Iſaiah, the ſon of Amos, came to him and ſaid unto him, thus ſaith the Lord, ſet thine houſe in order, for thou ſhalt die and not live; then Hezekiah turned his face unto the wall and prayed.*

Thus far we learn no more than that this ſickneſs of his was attended with all the ſymptoms of immediate death, and he had too great authority for believing it ſo; a little lower we learn both the diſeaſe, the phyſician and the remedy, *and Iſaiah ſaid, take a lump of figs, and they took and laid it upon the boil, and he recovered*[g]. A remedy, exactly ſuited to ſuch an angry tumor, and which has received the ſanction of all future practice, at leaſt ſo far that poultices of vegetables are found to be of ſingular efficacy firſt in drawing, and next in aſſwaging ſuch an inflammation as this was.

But what it was that brought upon the king this malady, is much the moſt intereſting enquiry of the two, and this we ſay was his vanity, for with all his good qualities, it has been ſhewn, that here was his foible; and now we may ſee the juſtice as well as the beauty of that repreſentation of him, in the book under examination, where we are preſented with a very minute detail of this ſickneſs of Hezekiah's, introduced with the very occaſion of its being ſent upon him, and of the ſalutary ends it was deſigned to anſwer, *that God may withdraw man from his purpoſe, and hide pride from man*[h], and, to ſhew that this was the whole deſign of Job's, as well as of Hezekiah's affliction, God himſelf ſets his ſeal to all that Elihu and the three friends had been contending for, in the dramatic part of the book, when he concludes his expoſtulations with reminding him,

[g] 2 Kings xx. 7. Iſ. xxxviii. 21. Sa maladie etoit apparemment une abcès, ou une ulcere. Le Pape Jeane xxi. croit que c'etoit une eſquinancie, il 'en juge par la remedie, qui le guerit, lequel eſt bon contre les inflammations, & pour meurir les duretez des amygdales, & des parotides. St. Jerôme dit, que quelques uns croit, que la maladie etoit le haut mal, ou l'epilepſie, contre laquelle tout ce qui eſt doux eſt tres utile. Calmet. in loc.

[h] Ch. xxxiii. 17.

that *He beholdeth all high things, and that he is a king over all the children of pride* [i].

This conſidered, ſome gueſs may probably enough be made at a malady St. Paul complains of, *a thorn in his fleſh* [k], which the learned are pretty well agreed in underſtanding of ſome bodily infirmity or other that he labored under, and not of any perſecution he met with in the courſe of his miniſtry, or of any carnal concupiſcence; ſome of the fathers ſpeak of it as a tradition of ſome ſtanding in the church, that he was afflicted with a violent head-ach [l], but whatever his diſtemper was, it is plain enough what he himſelf thought of it, that it was a diſtemper inflicted on him by ſome inviſible power, *a meſſenger of Satan, to buffet him, leſt he ſhould be exalted above meaſure.*

The very learned biſhop Bull hath ſet a diſcourſe upon this ſubject, where the reader's trouble will be amply repaid him in ſeeing the opinions of the great doctors of the antient church upon this Σκολοψ of St. Paul's [m], and if there be any arguing at this diſtance, from the analogy of language or from parity of circumſtances, I ſhould be very apt to ſuſpect that there is a greater reſemblance between this caſe of St. Paul's and that of Hezekiah's, than has been ever yet imagined; for clear it is that vanity, or a ſuſpicion at leaſt of vanity was at the bottom of each caſe: zeal was the grand point in both their characters, and ſpiritual pride the vice St. Paul was in danger of falling into *through the abundance of the revelations given him:* the vice, which Hezekiah fell into, through the abundance of God's favors granted him.

Other infirmities St. Paul had, and thoſe not a little diſadvantageous to him in the diſcharge of his miniſtry, for it is more than probable that he had ſomething ungraceful in his ſpeech, with ſome other leſs exceptionable faults in his perſon [n], but theſe he mentions only as topicks, upon which the profane wit and raillery of his enemies had been exerted: whereas *the thorn in the fleſh* he ſpeaks of as *given him*, for ſome particular purpoſe, to prevent his glorying in the diſtinguiſhed favors he had received above all the other apoſtles, and as a *meſſenger of Satan*, in order to *buffet him.*

This again he ſpeaks of elſewhere as an *infirmity* in his perſon viſible and notorious, ſuch as if they looked but upon his body they might hold him in contempt for, and ſuſpect perhaps that it

[i] Ch. xl. 34. [k] 2 Cor. xii. 7. [l] Tradunt cum graviſſimum capitis dolorem ſæpe perpeſſum, et hunc eſſe *Satanæ angelum*, qui appoſitus ei fuerit, ut ipſum colophizaret. Hieron. in loc. [m] Bull's Sermons, Vol. I. p. 138. [n] 2 Cor. x. 10.

was ſent as he owns it was, for *a temptation in his fleſh*[o]; and whether conſidering the virtues of this malady, as appropriated in ſcripture to this ſingle failing of mankind, vanity, and St. Paul's application of it to the ſelf ſame purpoſe, it might not after all, be a ſharp boil that was ſent to buffet him, is ſubmitted to the candid reader. In the mean time, the ſeat of this diſtemper, the acuteneſs of the pains attending it, its peculiar fitneſs to mortify man's pride, and its being termed *a meſſenger of Satan*, are circumſtances, which as they were the motives, muſt be too my apology for interpoſing this conjecture.

Hezekiah then was the immediate and the Jews the more remote object, which the poet had in view in this deſcription of Job's malady: the captivity was the Jews boil, and the boil the king's ſickneſs: their ſymptoms when we come to compare them, will be found to correſpond with great exactneſs, and their complaints are conceived in almoſt the ſame terms. It has been hinted more than once that this prince was a type of the jewiſh republick, in moſt of its principal ſtages, and we ſhall now ſee what foundation there is for that ſuggeſtion at this particular one; for vain and arrogant he was as they, in the midſt of affluence and ſucceſs, abject and deſponding as the moſt deſponding Jew, upon the firſt approach of any calamity: the inſtant he received the notice from the prophet, that this boil of his would prove mortal, he turned his face as a good man would, to the wall and prayed, but as a good man ſhould not, he aſſerts his innocence at the very hour that providence was chaſtizing him for his guilt, and falls into the moſt abject ſtate of deſpair.

The writing of Hezekiah, when he was ſick[p].

I ſaid in the cutting off of my days, I ſhall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the reſidue of my years. I ſaid I ſhall not ſee the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living: I ſhall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world. Mine age is departed, and is removed from me

The complaint of Job[q].

Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? Are not his days as the days of an hireling? As an hireling looketh for the rewards of his work, ſo am I made to poſſeſs months of vanity, and weariſom nights are appointed for me: when I lie down, I ſay, when ſhall I ariſe,

[o] Gal. iv. 13. [p] Iſai. xxxviii. [q] Job vii. 1.

as a ſhepherd's tent, I have cut off, like a weaver my life, he will cut me off with pineing ſickneſs, from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me; I reckoned till morning, that, like a lion, he would break all my bones, like a crane or a ſwallow, ſo did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upwards: O Lord, I am oppreſſed, undertake for me: What ſhall I ſay? He hath both ſpoken unto me, and himſelf hath done it: I ſhall go ſoftly all my years in the bitterneſs of my ſoul. Behold for peace I had great bitterneſs, but thou haſt caſt all my ſins behind thy back.

and the night be gone? And I am full of toſſings to and fro unto the dawning of the day. My fleſh is cloathed with worms and clods of duſt, my ſkin is broken and become loathſom: my days are ſwifter than a *weaver's ſhuttle*, and are ſpent without hope; O remember, that my life is wind: *mine eye ſhall no more ſee good, the eye of him that hath ſeen me ſhall ſee me no more*, thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.

Attend but cloſely to theſe two complaints, the caſt of their ſentiment and the ſimilitude of their expreſſion, and then judge, if the two caſes be not the ſame; but there is ſtill a third which bears too confeſſed a reſemblance to them both, not to have been obſerved, and that is the caſe of king David in *the Pſalms*, which, I will venture to ſay, requires more ſkill in ſcriptural pathology than them both, and with all the pains that have been expended in accounting for it, hath had the ill fortune to be the leaſt underſtood, and yet is to be explained from the ſelf-ſame principles.

The xxxviii and the three following Pſalms to ſpeak of no more at preſent, are ſo crowded with diſtreſs, that commentators have been at a loſs to find out any event or perſon, in the whole compaſs of jewiſh ſtory, to refer them to; what enhances the difficulty is, that the language, in which it is expreſſed, manifeſtly points out ſome ailment or other, acute and critical, and not a languid or chronical diſorder, ſeated in the fleſh and piercing to the very ſoul. "Put "me not to rebuke, O Lord, in thine anger: neither chaſten me in "thy heavy diſpleaſure. For thine arrows ſtick faſt in me: and thy "hand preſſeth me ſore. There is no health in my fleſh, becauſe "of thy diſpleaſure: neither is there any reſt in my bones, by reaſon "of my ſin. For my wickedneſſes are gone over my head: and are

" like a ſore burden, too heavy for me to bear. My wounds
" ſtink, and are corrupt: through my fooliſhneſs. I am brought
" into ſo great trouble and miſery: that I go mourning all the day
" long. For my loins are filled with a ſore diſeaſe: and there is
" no whole part in my body. I am feeble, and ſore ſmitten: I
" have roared for the very diſquietneſs of my heart. Lord, thou
" knoweſt all my deſire: and my groaning is not hid from thee.
" My heart panteth, my ſtrength hath failed me: and the ſight of
" mine eyes is gone from me. My lovers and my neighbours did
" ſtand looking upon my trouble: and my kinſmen ſtood afar off.
" They alſo that ſought after my life, laid ſnares for me: and
" they that went about to do me evil, talked of wickedneſs, and
" imagined deceit all the day long. As for me, I was like a deaf
" man, and heard not: and as one that is dumb, who doth not open
" his mouth. I became even as a man that heareth not: and in
" whoſe mouth are no reproofs."

What this affliction was a very learned paraphraſt tells us, is not certain[r]; it is generally thought, ſays he, that David was ſick, and that too of ſome noiſom dangerous ulcer: but he falling into a doleful complaint of the malignity of his enemies, and the coldneſs of his friends affections to him, the very circumſtance ſo highly wrought up in the interview between Job and his three friends, it is thought not improbable by others, that he is deſcribing the crazy condition he was in, under the perſecution of Saul, by the languiſhment of a ſick perſon under ſome dangerous diſeaſe; and this ſenſe we muſt either follow, or elſe ſay, he was at the ſame time ſick of a grievous diſeaſe when he laboured under theſe perſecutions.

A late ingenious editor of *the life of king David* has taken the learned prelate at his word, and concluded upon the bare authority of this very Pſalm, that David *at ſome part of his life*, muſt have been afflicted with a grievous diſtemper, which he conſidered as the chaſtiſement of God upon him for his ſins, and that this calamity fell upon him about the time[s] that a dangerous and rebellious conſpiracy was formed againſt him.

Were there any the leaſt foundation in this prince's ſtory to graft ſuch a ſuppoſition upon, it is more than probable it could not have eſcaped the ſacred hiſtorian, who has deſcended to the very minuteſt circumſtances in his life and character, and preſented us with all

[r] Patrick's Paraph. *Argument* to Pſ. xxxviii. [s] Life of King David. Vol. 11.

his

his weakneſs and tenderneſs on occaſions leſs inviting, than the diſtreſs ſo pathetically deſcribed in the pſalms before us; nor has the learned author himſelf with all his ſagacity, been able to produce any other or better authority for ſo intereſting a fact as this, than the pſalms.

But as we read no where elſe, of any ſuch ſickneſs that David had, nor can be certain what were the particular ſins, which drew upon him ſo heavy a calamity, as there are no grounds ſufficient in any antient Chronicles of thoſe times, to build ſuch a comment upon, he will excuſe our not falling in with an application, which to ſay no more of it, only ſuppoſes the very point in queſtion, and introduces into the life of king David a fact of great importance, utterly unknown to the ſacred hiſtorians.

Yet in one thing I readily concur with this author, and that is, that this diſtemper whatever it was, and whoever it was that labored under it, is the ſelf ſame in all its ſymptoms and appearances with that with which Job was viſited: I have long been conſidering it in that very light, and have ſuſpected all along that, at the ſame time it was the ſame diſeaſe, it was no improbable ſuppoſition that the patient too might be the ſame.

Convinced of this I am the leſs diſpoſed to diſpute the point with him, a point which he has ſo greatly labored, whether the whole proceſs of this diſtemper be not a certain indication of the ſmall pox, or as the learned and judicious phyſician his friend thinks, the elephantiaſis or leproſy, becauſe I conceive he has ſuggeſted himſelf a much better ſolution of this caſe, when waving his favorite ſpeculation, he concludes, " poſſibly all the pſalms on this head may be no more than figurative deſcriptions of the ſtate of his mind, ſick with ſin; this accordingly, was the prophetic ſtile, where ſin is figured under the idea of wounds and bruiſes and putrifying ſores [t]."

Poſſible it certainly is, and by this time it ſhould ſeem to be probable at leaſt that this is the very idea, which will lead us to a thorough acquaintance with all the diſtreſs painted both in theſe pſalms and in the book of Job; for that the ſoul is ſubject to all this diſtemperature is what every man muſt feel, who attends but with ordinary care to what paſſes within himſelf, or that makes but the leaſt obſervation upon other people; the beſt men living find ſome ſmall deviations from duty, ſome unruly appetite or inordinate af-

[t] Life of King David. Ib'd.

fection

fection lurking within them, and theſe are ſo many infallible ſymptoms of much ſickneſs and infirmity in the ſoul; either pride or avarice, either envy or hatred, luſt, anger or malice, ſome or all of them are ſtruggling to be gratified, and in the conflict are raiſed ſuch fevers and ferments in the human ſoul, as are rarely laid but at the expence of its innocence.

What indeed the connection is between our bodily diſtempers and the diſeaſes of the ſoul is hard to ſay, but the connection is too manifeſt to admit of any doubt, they plainly keep ſuch equal pace with the ſtate and temper of the body, and produce ſuch effects upon the countenances and complexions of men, as ſhews that they partake very greatly of the nature of our bodily diſorders.

This too is the language of Scripture; *a ſound heart* ſaies the wiſeman, *is the life of the fleſh, but envy is the the rottenneſs of the bones*[u]: it was this paſſion that had ſo ſevere an effect upon Cain, for we read, that he *was very wroth and his countenance fell*[w]: it was this that produced the like effect upon Ahab, *he came* we find, *into his houſe, laid him down upon his bed, and* mortified upon the miſcarriage of his application for the vineyard of Naboth, *turned away his face and would eat no bread*[x]: and was it not this too that operated in much the ſame way upon Haman? for *when he had recounted to his friends the glory of his riches, the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the king had advanced him above all others,* he gives this wretched account of himſelf, *that all yet availeth me nothing ſo long as I ſee Mordecai the Jew ſitting at the king's gate*[y].

And yet are theſe only the ſlighter indiſpoſitions of the ſoul, ſuch as gentle phyſick may reach or mortification remedy: but when things are come to ſo deſperate a paſs with us, that *the whole head is ſick and the whole heart faint,* our diſtemper is then drawing on to its criſis, and though *the ſpirit of a man may bear his infirmities,* may hold up perhaps under the little accidental evils brought upon it by careleſſneſs or ſurprize, yet *a wounded ſpirit who can bear*[z]? A conſcience, wounded by preſumptuous or galled by habitual ſins, is a malady that calls for all our courage to ſupport, and for all the aid that religion can adminiſter, and accordingly as a malady religion treats it.

Sin viewed in this reſpect, merely as the diſtemper of the ſoul, would well juſtify all that deſponding language of the pſalmiſt, and

[u] Prov. xiv. 3. [w] Gen. iv. 5. [x] 1 Kings xxi. 4. [y] Eſth. v. 13.
[z] Prov. xviii. 14.

draw

draw forth all thoſe tears from an heart conſcious of its guilt, and bent upon making its peace with an offended God; but ſtill though this promiſe a much fairer account of the pſalmiſt's diſeaſe, than any of thoſe whimſical ſolutions, which firſt ſuppoſe a fact at leaſt precarious, and next to proceed to reaſon upon it as certain, it comes not up preciſely to the point in queſtion.

For ſymptoms there are in this complaint, which plainly indicate both its ſeat and its nature: he ſpeaks of it as an ulcer corrupt and noiſome, *of his loins being filled with a ſore diſeaſe*, ſo acute and painful that he had *roared for the very diſquietneſs of his heart* [a]; how this came upon him he confeſſes, was no ſecret to him, conſcious as he was, of having drawn upon himſelf ſo heavy a judgment, for *my wickedneſſes are gone over my head, and are like a ſore burden too heavy for me to bear* [b].

What then if once for all, we reject the commonly received *hypotheſis* of king David being either the author or the ſubject of this pſalm, and look out for ſome other perſon, to whoſe circumſtances it may be accommodated with more authentic vouchers from hiſtory, and with more exactneſs from pathology? Hezekiah's ſickneſs is a fact, and his particular diſeaſe a circumſtance which, if other conſiderations hinder not, would preciſely anſwer the whole deſcription of this grievous ſickneſs: his anguiſh and his deſpair, his guilt and his conſciouſneſs of it are expreſſed, in that *writing* of his *when he was ſick*, in nearly the ſame terms with thoſe in this and the following pſalms, and his boil is the very malady, that ſuits all thoſe expreſſions both of pain and corruption.

Aben-Eſra therefore upon the ſixth verſe of Iſaiah, obſerves, that, CHABBURAH, the word rendered *bruiſes*, ſignifies ſtrictly ſuch a bruiſe in which there is collected ſome putrid matter: and Clarius with ſingular ſagacity, diſtinguiſhes it in the pſalm before us, as an ulcer or abſceſs of the ſame kind, and adds what is greatly to the matter in hand, that ſuch an ulcer is reckoned among the curſes of the law; upon this criticiſm he ſuſpects as he well might, that the pſalmiſt whoever he was, muſt have been afflicted at this time, with an abſceſs in his thigh *like that of Hezekiah*'s, that it was ſo noiſom as to affect his whole body, and he in danger of never recovering the uſe of that limb [c].

Like

[a] Pſ. xxxviii. 5. [b] Ibid. v. 4.

[c] Dictio ſane Hebræa, abſceſſum & ulcus, in quo ſit pus, ſignificans; numeratur inter maledicta legis Deut. xxviii, ac item Eſai i. inter ea quæ tum populo ob ſuam impietatem accide-

Like to Hezekiah's boil it certainly is in all its appearances, ſo very like, that the learned Patrick, who contends for the application of the xxxviiith pſalm to king David's caſe, when he comes to the xlivth pſalm, which is plainly of the ſame caſt and relates to the ſame fact, finds himſelf obliged to drop his hypotheſis, and fairly owns, that "he can find no time ſo likely for the penning of it, as the days of Hezekiah, who was a pious reformer of that church, and had reſtored the divine ſervice according to the law of Moſes and the ordinances of David: and yet notwithſtanding all this, was invaded by the king of Aſſyria, who did not only make ſome inroads upon him and carry away a great many people, but took away the fenced cities, and ſate down before him with a great army; in this ſtraight therefore either Hezekiah himſelf, of whoſe ſkill in compoſitions of this kind we have a taſte, in the hymn compoſed upon his ſickneſs, or ſome other inſpired prophet by his command, indicted this pſalm [d]."

Carry but this reaſoning back to the pſalm under examination, and we ſhall be pretty near the truth of the matter; it is the boil of Hezekiah that the author manifeſtly had in view in this deſcription, and it is the captivity of the Jews ſhadowed under this boil, and figured under their prince's malady, that is the ſubject of all the diſtreſs.

What renders this conjecture ſtill more probable is, that in the procedure of this diſtreſs in theſe three pſalms, we find ſtill more ſtriking paſſages, that in the judgment of the beſt commentators, are to be referred to this one event and no other: here we read the hiſtory of God's people from the very infancy of their ſtate, are told of the tender mercies of God to it through a ſeries of ſo many hundred years, and then of his deſerting it, and abandoning it a prey to its enemies.

Thus, "we have heard with our ears, our fathers have told us "what thou didſt in their days, in the times of old, how thou didſt "drive out the heathen, and plantedſt them in, how thou didſt af- "flict the people, and caſt them out;—But now thou haſt caſt us "off, and put us to ſhame, and goeſt not forth with our armies:

acciderant. Quod *cicatrices* vertit Interpres, alii verterunt livores vel ulcera, et videtur ſpeciem morbi exprimere: fortaſſe vero, ut Ezechias, ita hic peſtilenti aliquo abſceſſu laboravit in femore, eoque tam noxio, ut totum corpus dejiceretur, periculumque eſſet non recuperandam gradiendi facultatem. **Clar.** in v. 5.

[d] Patrick Argument to xliv. Pſ.

" thou makeſt us to turn our backs upon our enemies, and they which " hate us ſpoil our goods: thou haſt given us up like ſheep, and haſt " ſcattered us abroad among the heathen: thou ſelleſt thy people for " nought, and takeſt no money for them: thou makeſt us a reproach " to our neighbours, a ſcorn and deriſion to them that are round a- " bout us: thou makeſt us a by-word among the heathen, a ſhaking " of the head among the people." To what contempt or deſpair " think we, can all this relate, but to that brought upon the Jews " by the Babyloniſh captivity?"

And that this is the true key to thoſe pſalms, we have been looking into, I am the more confident, as the three ſubſequent ones are all of them, ſongs of triumph and deliverance, and either written in the ſpirit of prophecy, to foretell the reſtoration of the Jews to their country and temple, or to celebrate it as having already taken place, a dilemma, which the learned reader will readily account for from that peculiarity in the hebrew language, where the *paſt* and *future* are not always eaſy to be diſtinguiſhed.

There is indeed a grandeur and majeſty in the firſt of theſe pſalms, that has very deſervedly made it always conſidered as having reſpect to the coming of the Meſſiah, ſuch is " thy throne, O God, endu- " reth for ever and ever, the ſceptre of thy kingdom is a right ſcep- " tre, thou haſt loved righteouſneſs, and hated iniquity, wherefore " God even thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladneſs above " thy fellows[e]," but yet this hinders not why in the primary ſenſe of the words, they might not import what we are contending for.

Thus for inſtance, moſt of the prophecies relating to this grand event, the reſtoration of the jewiſh church and polity, are conceived in ſuch high terms, that the literal completion of them muſt be looked for from the goſpel ſtate of Chriſt's kingdom, with which they better comport, than with thoſe times nearer the prophet's view, when their accompliſhment was but juſt commencing: and yet no man who reads them, can doubt but the reſtoration of the Jews in God's good time, was the primary object of them; the ſame may be obſerved of theſe pſalms in particular, where through all the ſublimity of ſentiment and figure, this one point is always viſible.

And I am greatly indeed miſtaken, if it be not on occaſion of rebuilding the walls of Jeruſalem, and finiſhing their temple once more for the worſhip and ſervice of God, or at leaſt upon the proſpect of

[e] Pſ. xlv. 6.

all

all this, that we are preſented below with that apoſtrophe, " Let " the mount Sion rejoice, and the daughters of Judah be glad be- " cauſe of thy judgments O God; walk about Zion, and go round " about her, and tell out the towers thereof: mark well her bul- " warks, ſet up her palaces, that ye may tell them that come after, " that God is our God for ever and ever[f]."

I will only add, for there is no end of copying all the paſſages that refer to this event, that the author be he who he would, has cloſed this ſubject with a cool diſpaſſionate reflection upon pride, the characteriſtic vice of the Jews, and reminding them ever and anon, of the alternative they either had experienced or one day might, he endeavours to humble them into a becoming ſenſe of themſelves, and into one more reverent of God, who had done ſo great things for them.

Thus, " there be ſome that put their truſt in their goods, and " boaſt themſelves in the multitude of their riches, but no man " may deliver his brother, (that they had experienced,) nor make a- " greement with God for him: for it coſt more to redeem their ſouls, " ſo that he muſt let that alone for ever;—and yet they think " that their houſes ſhall endure for ever, and that their dwelling " places ſhall endure from one generation to another, and call their " lands by their own names: this is their fooliſhneſs, and their poſte- " rity praiſe their ſaying; they lie in the hell like ſheep, death gnaw- " eth upon them, and the righteous ſhall have domination over them " in the morning, their beauty ſhall conſume in their ſepulchre out " of their dwelling: but God ſhall deliver my ſoul from the place " of hell, for he ſhall receive me[g]."

Were this pſalm as ſome contend, barely a ſpeculation upon the vanity of all earthly enjoyments, and the certainty of death as the grand period of all man's labors, it had ſcarce been uſhered in with all that ſolemnity it is; death in ſuch a wretched ſituation had been the moſt deſirable refuge, and that was a leſſon to be learnt from the whole courſe and conſtitution of nature, and above all, from every day's obſervation: but under this one known and obvious truth, to convey to the Jews another, of equal certainty and importance to them, their captivity as the puniſhment of their ſins, was a refinement upon the general doctrine of mortality, that very juſtly deſerves the diſtinction the pſalmiſt gives it, when he calls it a dark ſpeech and a parable; " I will incline mine ear to the parable, I " will ſhew my dark ſpeech upon the harp[h]."

[f] Pſ. xlviii. 11. [g] Pſ. xlix. [h] Ibid. v. 4.

A parable it certainly is and a beautiful one too, founded in the connection there is between ſin and death, and the analogy the captivity bore to this connection; the term of man's life is elſewhere applied with the ſame propriety to their captivity, "the days of our age "are threeſcore years and ten," the very term of their captivity, and though as it was natural to conceive in conducting ſuch an alluſion, there be ſome circumſtances that ſeem to reſtrain it to the literal interpretation, and he pray to God "ſo teach us to number our days, "that we may apply our hearts unto wiſdom," yet all this is conſiſtent enough with this idea of the pſalm.

He adds therefore to all the reſt, what in no tolerable ſenſe can be interpreted up to the letter, and hath a noble meaning in the figure; "turn thee again, O Lord, at the laſt, and be gracious to thy ſer- "vants, O ſatisfy us with thy mercy and that ſoon, ſo ſhall we re- "joice and be glad all the days of our life;" a very extraordinary petition indeed, if death natural or eternal, were the only ſubject of this pſalm, which that it cannot be, is yet more manifeſt, from his carrying his petition ſtill farther, "comfort us again now after the time "that thou haſt plagued us, and for the years wherein we have ſuf- "fered adverſity, ſhew thy ſervants thy work and their children thy "glory[i]."

And to the very caſe in hand, there is a parable in Iſaiah[k], which goes to the very bottom of this whole analogy, and will reflect all the light we want, upon this figurative manner of expreſſion; it is that where he is commanded to take up his proverb againſt the king of Babylon, where hell is repreſented "as moving from beneath to "meet him at his coming, as ſtirring up all the dead againſt him: "his pomp is brought down to the grave, the worm is ſpread under "him, and the worms cover him[k]."

Here we ſee death reigning as it were, in his kingdom, attended with all his diſmal retinue, and triumphing over the proud city; but by hell and the grave neither here nor in thoſe pſalms, are thoſe places ſtrictly ſo called, to be underſtood, and in this the commentators upon this paſſage, are agreed, and all that can be meant, is the utter ruin and deſtruction of Babylon; *hell* therefore and the *grave*, *darkneſs* and the *ſhadow of death*, are all of them we may obſerve, figures under which the poetical books of ſcripture ſpeak of the diſſolution of ſtates and kingdoms; an obſervation that I

[i] Pſ. xc. [k] Iſai. xiv.

am

am the more ſolicitous to eſtabliſh here, becauſe hereafter ſome farther uſe will be made of it.

Againſt this application of theſe pſalms to the Babyloniſh captivity, I know of no material objection but the titles of them, which it muſt be owned, ſeem to portend ſome difficulty; that of the xxxviiith is a *pſalm of David to bring to remembrance*, a title peculiar to this and the lxxth, which, from that and ſome other ſimilar circumſtances, ſhould ſeem more properly placed together, and may be looked upon as ſo many mementoes to the Jews of thoſe dreadful calamities, which their prophets had forewarned them of, and pointing out to them this very period which Moſes and the prophets had ſpoken of, when their captivity was to break out upon them like a purulent boil, infeſting their very fleſh and bones.

The three ſubſequent ones are entitled likewiſe each of them, *a pſalm of David*, and upon that authority I take for granted it is, that they have been always aſcribed to him as the author of them, and adopted as part of his hiſtory; but how far ſuch titles are to be urged in prejudice of facts, is a queſtion. The more probable reſolution of this difficulty is, either what biſhop Patrick has ſuggeſted upon the xlivth, that they were all of them, compoſed by Hezekiah in his ſickneſs, or what I conceive bids ſtill fairer for the truth, by ſome of their pſalmodiſts during the captivity [l], upon the ſame plan with that of Hezekiah's, preſerved in the book of Iſaiah.

Vitringa makes no doubt but that among the *pſalms of David* there are many that were compoſed by Hezekiah [m], and certain it is that there are others, that bear the ſame inſcription, that the learned univerſally concur in giving to ſome other author. Thus for inſtance, the cxxxviith and the cxxxviiith pſalms are each, entitled a *pſalm of David*, and yet nothing can be more clear than that they were written ſome time during the captivity [n]; the LXX. therefore entitle the latter, *a pſalm to David of Haggai and Zechariah*, and probably enough this is its proper title, for that this gift remained with the prophets at this period, appears from Habbakuck, who compoſed that celebrated prayer of his, after the manner of David's pſalms, in which there are ſeveral words ſuch as Sigio-

[l] Ad hos præterea hymnos, qui ex templi excidio, ſic tanquam reliquæ e naufragio tabulæ emerſerunt, alii acceſſerunt, qui in vinculis Babylonicis, ad calamitates Iſraeliticæ gentis deplorandas coram Deo, a piis viris compoſiti ſunt. Huet. Dem. Ev. p. 232.

[m] Vitring. Comm. in Eſai. xxxviii. [n] Quæ ſi quis ad Davidis ætatem referre nitatur, idem Ararim in Parthiâ, Tigrim in Germania reperire poſſit. Ibid.

noth, Selah, and Neginoth, not to be met with any where but in the book of pſalms [o].

The learned Huette therefore ſuppoſes this to be the caſe with the generality of thoſe pſalms, that bear the title LEDABID, or *a pſalm of David*; "Aben-Ezra" ſays he, "rejects the opinion of thoſe antient doctors, who believed every pſalm with this title, to have been compoſed by David, to which I would add that ſuch pſalms were compoſed by his pattern or in his manner: thus the cxxxviith; "*By the waters of Babylon we ſate down and wept,*" is intitled *a pſalm to David of Jeremiah's*, namely that it was compoſed by Jeremiah after the manner of David; ſo Virgil when he wrote Eclogues after the manner of Theocritus the Syracuſan, calls it a Syracuſan verſe: and when he wrote his Georgics after the manner of Heſiod the Aſcrean, he calls it an Aſcrean verſe [p];" ſo too we call the ſeveral kinds of verſe, Pindaric, Sapphic, Anacreontic, Miltonic or Hudibraſtic, according to the different ſpecies of verſe firſt invented by thoſe maſters.

One uſe that I have to make of all this, is juſt to remark, that to extract materials out of ſuch poetical compoſitions, for real hiſtory is a practice by no means warrantable, unleſs we firſt authenticate the title of each pſalm, and can be ſure to fix both the perſon and the time it belongs to, which is a work of no ſmall niceity: for what we juſtly receive upon the teſtimony of Ezra, for inſtance, as a ſacred hiſtorian, we ſhould ſcarce be juſtified in building upon, provided we had no other authority for it than a pſalm of his compoſing, unleſs we would put the lines of Virgil or Homer, and the ſublime ſtrokes of Orpheus and Pindar, upon the ſame footing with the authority of a Livy or a Thucydides.

But if the reader ſhould be diſpoſed to think, that the liberty I thus condemn in others, I have been all along taking myſelf, that I confeſs, is an objection it behoves me to obviate; and therefore let him but pleaſe to conſider, that in the firſt place, the application I have made of theſe pſalms to Hezekiah's caſe has the warrant both of hiſtory and commentators for its authority, and in the next, is ſupported by the analogy of language and antient pathology, that objection will appear to

[o] Habb. iii.

[p] Cenſuerunt vetuſtiores Magiſtri, quicunque pſalmus præfixum habuit hoc lemma, Davidem auctorem habuiſſe, verum hanc quoque opinionem refellit Aben-Ezra. Id ſi fit, quod vere ſane ſimile eſt, jam liquet cur Pſ. cxxxvii. ita inſcribitur τῷ Δαβὶδ Ἰερεμίᾳ, nimirum ut a Jeremia ſcriptus ſignificetur ad pſalmorum Davidis exemplum; ac ſi diceres Pſalmus Davidicus Jeremiæ, ita Syracoſio verſu ſe ludere dicebat Virgilius, cum ad exemplum Theocriti Eclogas conſcriberet, ita et Aſcræum carmen, cum Georgica ad Heſiodi exemplum componeret. Ibid.

have but little foundation; though in truth, had the *book of Job* been conſidered merely as hiſtorical, in theſe ſheets, I ſhould ſcarce have troubled him with any conjectures of mine, about either the titles or the ſubject of the pſalms, that have been criticized in the proſecution of this work: my only reaſon for interfering at all in this province was, that as I look upon the book its-ſelf, and am perſuaded I have thus far ſhewn it to be, not only a piece of poetry, but poetry enriched with all the ſublimity of figures and allegory, and converſant probably about the very ſubject, which is the very ſubject of theſe pſalms, I know not how I could have diſcharged the taſk I ſate down to, with more propriety or exactneſs, than by conſidering how far thoſe pſalms, which ſpoke the ſelf ſame language with my author, were or were not relating the ſelf ſame fact too.

Grotius and Le Clerc had both of them, hit upon the ſame track, and obſerved what it was ſcarce poſſible for any one, who looked but into the margin of his bible, to avoid obſerving, that this book contained in it many paſſages reſembling the pſalms [q]; but unfortunately, both of them fell into a concluſion at leaſt very foreign to any means of diſcovering the true ſenſe of either the *pſalms* or the *book of Job*, and deviated into a conjecture about which was the copy and which the original; for as the learned author of the *Divine Legation*, &c. very judiciouſly remarks, "if the ſacred writers muſt needs have borrowed from one another, it may be as fairly ſaid, that the authors of the pſalms borrowed from the *book of Job*, as that the author of the book of Job borrowed from the pſalms [r]."

Indeed we have ſo few *data* to go upon towards determining ſo nice a point, that I am perſuaded, this is a problem which is never likely to be ſolved from ſtile or language. But there is a concluſion much more intereſting, and therefore much more worthy our attention to be drawn from it, and that is, that as the ſtile and ſentiment of them both is much the ſame, it is more than probable they both relate to one and the ſame ſtory.

The next uſe I would make of this compariſon between the two books is, to give the reader ſome notion of the propriety of that idea, under which they both convey the Babyloniſh captivity, and

[q] Grot. Comm. in Job. On y trouve des imitations de diverſe endroits des Pſeaumes. mais vous demanderez, peût etre, comment on peut ſavoir, que c'eſt l'auteur du livre de Job, qui a imitè des pſeaumes, & non pas les auteurs des pſeaumes? il eſt aiſe de vous ſatisfaire. on connôit qu'un auteur eſt imitè une autre a ceci, c'eſt que l'imitation n'eſt pas ſi belle, que l'originals qui exprime ordinairement les choſes d'une maniere plus nette & plus naturelle que la copie, &c. Sent. de quelques Theol. Holl. p. 183.

[r] Div. Leg. Vol. II. p. 499.

that

that we ſay, is a boil, or abſceſs; this indeed is an attempt, that may be thought foreign enough to my profeſſion, but as it is of ſervice to explain the whole conduct of this allegory there is no declining it: and I ſhall hope for the candid reader's indulgence to what I cannot help foreſeeing, the imperfection of it.

" A boil" the phyſicians tell us, " proceeds from a groſs vicious blood ſeparated from the reſt, and caſt forth by the ſtrength of nature into the external parts [t]:" its ſymptoms are an inflammation, great heat, a ſwelling hard and red, ſhooting pain, throbbing, and heavineſs, and if ſeated in any of the nobler parts, the patient grows feveriſh and is in great pain, at night eſpecially [u]." Now what improvements phyſick may have made as a ſcience, in the courſe of ſo many ages ſince Moſes, or whether he owed his ſkill in it to Egypt, where the Ibis and the Hippopotamus are ſaid to have given riſe to two of its nobleſt evacuations [v], I cannot ſay; but conſidering that the very firſt account we have, of the boil comes from that country, and it is called all along, by way of eminence, *the boil of Egypt*, one would be almoſt tempted to think that Moſes borrowed his accompliſhment in this art from that quarter, and that he excelled as a phyſician as well as a law-giver.

For thus it is that he deſcribes this diſtemper, *the Lord ſhall ſmite thee with a conſumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with extreme burning, and with the botch of Egypt* [w]. There is no difference that I can ſee, between the ſymptoms as they lie in the bible and the medical tracts, than that Moſes begins where the phyſicians generally end, with the conſumption, which from either neglect or a diſcharge too plentiful for nature to ſupport, is not unfrequently, the laſt ſtage of this diſtemper.

The pſalmiſt whoever he was, came probably by woful experience at Babylon, at what Moſes had learnt in Egypt from theory, the ſymptoms of this angry boil; *thine arrows*, he complains, *ſtick*

[t] Wiſeman's Chirurg. Treat. p. 42. [u] Abſceſſuum generationem plerumque inflammatio præcedit; ſequitur ardor loci vehemens, & major tumor, magiſque quam antea rubicundus & durus, cum punctorio dolore, & pulſu, ac gravitate; quod ſi nobilis ſit locus, febris quoque accedit, & noctu dolent maxime & febriunt. Paul. Æginet. de re med. L. iv. c. 18.

[v] Clyſtering and bleeding. Hippopotamus in quadam medendi parte etiam magiſter extitit; aſſiduâ namque ſatietate obeſus, exit in littus, recentes arundinum cæſuras ſpeculatum: atque ubi acutiſſimum videt ſtirpem, imprimens corpus, venam quandam in crure vulnerat, atque ita profluvio ſanguinis morbidum alias corpus exonerat, & plagam limo rurſus obducit. Simile quiddam & volucris in eadem Ægypto monſtravit, quæ vocatur Ibis: roſtri aduncitate per eam partem ſe proluens, qua reddi ciborum onera maxime ſalubre eſt, Plin. Nat. Hiſt. L. viii. § 40. [w] Deut. xxviii. 21.

faſt

faſt in me, and thy hand preſſeth me ſore; my wounds ſtink and are corrupt, my loins are filled with a ſore diſeaſe, I am feeble and ſore ſmitten, I have roared for the very diſquietneſs of my heart; and elſewhere, *every night waſh I my bed and water my couch with my tears*[w]. Whatever ſpeculations theſe complaints have given handle to, there can be no queſtion about the diſeaſe after ſo ſpecific a detail of ſymptoms as this, and if there were, Hezekiah's caſe we have ſeen, ſufficiently explains it; to which give me leave to add, what I have ſince collected from the antient phyſicians, Ægineta, Ætius, and Celſus, as well as ſome of the moderns, that figs make one eſſential ingredient in all the applications of poultices to the parts affected with boils[x].

And no doubt but Moſes was too well acquainted with the conſtitution of the Iſraelites, not to foreſee what were the diſeaſes to which they were moſt liable: he had experienced through a long ſeries of obſervation, an habit in them too groſs and vicious too, not to end one day or other in ſome ſevere diſorder that would threaten them with diſſolution: ſtill for ends ſuiting the intentions of providence in ſelecting them from all the nations of the world, their diſſolution was not to take place till a time very diſtant from their captivity; and therefore their captivity might well be conſidered under this idea of a boil, as the laſt and ſtrongeſt effort of nature to throw off, what had been ſo long gathering to a head, thoſe vicious humors.

Acute and painful it was to be even almoſt unto death, but then the diſeaſe its-ſelf was to be their remedy, and it was to be conſidered rather as a critical diſcharge than a mortal ulcer, conſiſtently enough with theſe boils, which, the phyſicians ſay, "are for the moſt part without danger, and predict health, the common ſort eſpecially, and frequently cure, though nothing be applied to them, for they come to maturity and break of their own accord[y]."

What gives great countenance to the analogy here ſuggeſted, between their captivity and this malady is, that hitherto Moſes ſpeaks of it as grievous indeed enough, but not as either deſperate or mortal, but when he comes to threaten them upon their farther diſobedience, with *plagues wonderful, and the plagues of their ſeed, even great plagues*, he then tells them in downright terms, that they

[w] Pſ. xxxviii. 5. [x] Ficus pingues exactiſſime contundantur, ut nihil inalteratum in ipſis apparent, & cataplaſma imponatur. Æt. Med. Tetrab. Serm. I. c. 179.
[y] Wiſeman's Chirurg. Treat. p. 42.

ſhould be *plagues of long continuance, and ſore ſickneſſes*, not like this, but *of long continuance*; that *God would bring upon them all the diſeaſes of Egypt, which they were afraid of, and which ſhould cleave unto them, alſo every ſickneſs, and every plague, which is not written in this book of the law, UNTIL THEY BE DESTROYED*[z]. A prophecy this, which if we go about to expound to the letter, we may well deſpair of meeting with its accompliſhment, but if we view it in this light, as two of our beſt commentators have done[a], it may be ſeen in its true beauty and proportion, when applied to the final diſperſion of the Jews by the Romans; their captivity in ſhort was but a ſeventy years affliction to them, but their diſperſion was the natural death, and the utter deſtruction of their republick.

And by this time it ſhould ſeem, we have got pretty well to the bottom of this angry tumor, and ſeen of what parts and principles this boil of Job's conſiſts; there remains only one ſymptom in his caſe to be diſcuſſed, which however has been ſo tampered with, that like all other unſkilful treatment, the tampering with it has rather protracted than contributed to the cure, and that is, his *ſcraping himſelf with a potſherd*[b]; a circumſtance coarſe indeed enough, yet at the ſame time conſidering the diſeaſe, but natural, in which little gratifications of this kind though they may inflame, give preſent relief.

And this again though it has been matter of infinite offence to both criticks and commentators upon the literal plan, is a confirmation ſtrong and deciſive of this particular diſeaſe of Job's, becauſe the "very ſymptom which indicates a perfect boil, or abſceſs," according to the phyſician's notion of it, "is the pricking and itching of the part affected[c]."

Upon this occaſion the very learned Dr. Lightfoot has entered upon a compariſon extremely curious, of the botch of Egypt and this boil of Job's, and upon a thorough examination of them, preſents us with a very formal diſtinction between the two caſes; "the latter he conſiders only as a burning itch, or an inflamed ſcab, an intolerable dry itch, which his nails could not ſcratch off, but he was glad to make uſe of a potſherd to ſcrub himſelf with; the former was ſomething higher than that, having blains and boils, that broke out with it, which Job's had not[d]."

[z] Deut. xxviii. 59. [a] Patrick Com. in loc. Jackſon in loc. [b] Ch. II. 8.
[c] Ubi vero abſceſſus eſt perfectus punctura fiunt pruriginoſæ. Ægin. L. iv. c. 18.
[d] Lightfoot Com. on Exod. ix. 10.

What foundation there may be in the diagnoſtic ſymptoms of the two diſeaſes, to ground ſuch a nice diſtinction upon, I am not ſkilful enough to determine, but if there be any real difference between them, I ſhould ſuſpect that it is nothing more than what aroſe from the difference of climate, and not from any thing in the diſeaſes themſelves, and that, of the two, the boil of Babylon was both higher and more malignant than the botch of Egypt.

But to have nothing more to do with ſuch ſpeculations, how could the author of this book have proceeded more conſiſtently with the idea he had ſet out with of Job's fictitious diſtemper, than by repreſenting him teized and tormented as he was, by a ſcrophulous eruption, laying hold on the firſt thing that came to hand, and giving vent to a paſſion not to be gratified but by ſome ſuch indulgence; I have ſeen myſelf, an acquaintance of my own, in ſuch a ſcrophulous diſorder, take a knife, the moſt ragged he could come at, and tear the ſkin from knee to toe, till the blood ouzed out from every pore, and own at the ſame time that it was the greateſt relief he found. Zipporah for want of a more convenient inſtrument, *took a ſharp ſtone, and cut off the foreſkin of her ſon* [e]. Arnobius ſpeaks of Atys's catching up a potſherd, and caſtrating himſelf with it [f]; and the Dæmoniac that lived among the tombs, *cut himſelf* we are told, *with ſtones* [g]; and yet no alarm that I know of, has been raiſed about the particular inſtrument in any of theſe caſes though offence be taken at ſo very innocent a matter as the potſherd in the caſe before us, and ſuch mighty ſtreſs is laid upon it, that it has been deemed alone, a ſufficient circumſtance for rejecting the application of this whole ſtory to the Jews [h], who had an expreſs proviſion it ſeems, in their law, againſt *making any cuttings in their fleſh* [i].

Not that the Jews were ſo ſcrupulouſly obſervant of this law, as we may imagine: for we are told they practiſed all this barbarous ceremony in the very face of it: the prophet Hoſea complains of their having deſerted God in this as well as in almoſt every other inſtance, *Wo unto them for they have not cried unto me with their hearts, when they howled upon their beds, they aſſemble themſelves for corn and wine, and they rebel againſt me* [k].

[e] Exod. iv. 25. [f] Rapit Atys teſtulam, quam inſtigator ipſe geſtitabat inſaniæ, furiarum & ipſe plenus deſceat, &c. Arnob. adverſus Gent. L. v. [g] Mark v. 5. [h] Calmet in loc. & *Diſſ. ſur la malade.* [i] Deut. xiv. 1. [k] Hoſ. vii. 14.

If we take the tranſlation of this paſſage from the LXX, who render the original word, SOR, here tranſlated *rebel*, by κατεκεντησθε, *cut themſelves*, we ſhall then ſee what this particular inſtance of their rebellion was; it was their making not any cuttings in their fleſh, but ſuch cuttings, as the heathens practiſed: ſuch as they conſidered to be expiatory, were connected with ſacrifices and looked upon as ſolemn acts of religion [l]; and in this ſenſe it is that Theodoret paraphraſes the text of Hoſea, "they have performed gentile ſacrifices and glutted as it were, with thoſe good things of mine, have made inciſions in their bodies in the idols temples [m]."

I will not ſay that this is the very text, upon which the author of the book of Job has grounded this alluſion, but to me it ſeems more than probable, that the exceſs and frenzy the Jews had run into in their whole corrupt ceremonial, about the time we are ſpeaking of, was in his view; idolatry was then their whole turn, and nothing either ſo extravagant or ſo ridiculous in that worſhip, which they did not imitate; the prieſts of Baal *cut themſelves with knives and lancets till the blood guſhed out* [n], and in the proceſſion of the Syrian goddeſs among other frantic pieces of extravagance, they who carried her about, took out their ſwords and cut themſelves [o]; and what is ſtill more to our purpoſe, the practice of the whole heathen world, in their funeral ceremonies, was to pluck off their hair and to tear their fleſh, againſt both of which the Jews indeed had an expreſs command, but it does not appear they obſerved it [p].

The truth is, they wanted neither ſagacity nor inclination to improve the diſtinction, their law ſeemed to point out to them between ſimple inciſions, and inciſions made as acts of religion; the later Rabbins, not leſs happy in this faculty than their maſters, ſplit the hair ſtill nicer, and introduced another diſtinction, mentioned by Maimonides, "that though the tearing the fleſh, and ſhaving the head were forbidden by the law of Moſes, yet he who tears his fleſh or

[l] E verſione Græca colligere pronum eſt, non omnes inciſiones in funeribus uſitatas, ſed ενλομιδας, ſciſſuras piaculares, cum ſacrificio ſolenni conjunctas, vetitas exiſtimâſſe. Spencer de *leg. Heb.* V. I. p. 407. [m] *Ibid.* τας ἐθνικας τελεἰας ἐπελεἰλων, κ᾽ τοις ἐμοις ἀγαθοις ἀνεφωνἰες, ἐν τοις ἐιδωλικοις ναοις τας καλυμενας ἐνλομιδας τοις σφων ἀυτων προσεφερον σωμασι. Theod. Com. in loc. [n] 1 Kings xviii. 28. [o] Patrick Com. *ibid.*

[p] Quamvis autem hæc præpoſtera lugendi ratio, ob cauſes tam graves, interdicta fuerit, aperte conſtat eam inter Hebræas antiquos plurimum invaluiſſe. Spencer. de *Leg. Heb.* V. I. p. 407. Mos fuit apud veteres, & uſque hodie permanet in quibuſdam Judæorum, ut in luctibus lacertos incidant, & calviciem faciant. Hieron. in Jer. xvi. 6.

ſhaves

ſhaves his head *on account of the falling of his houſe*, or the ſtranding of his ſhip, is free from the penalties of that law: nor is any one liable to it, unleſs he does it for the ſake of the dead or in honor of an idol [q], a diſtinction worthy of a conclave of Jeſuits, and which one would almoſt think, had been hatched on purpoſe to ſalve this very caſe.

[q] Qui calvitiem capiti inducit, aut carnem ſuam lacerat, propter ruinam domus, aut navim mari ſubmorſum, liber eſt, neque enim vapulat quis, niſi ſe, defuncti vel idoli ergo, carpſerit. Spencer. *ibid.*

SECT.

SECT. V.

IT muſt be owned indeed, that what between their own natural propenſity to idolatry, and the extreme readineſs of their doctors to oblige them with any comment, that could diſpenſe with their obſervance of the law: what between the ignorance of the laity, and the cunning of their prieſts: the pride and avarice of the one, and the ſervile compliance of the other, never was there ſo thorough a corruption in any people as in the Jews, from the ſole of the foot to the crown of the head, at this period; their princes and their prophets, their prieſts and their Levites, men, women and children were all over-run with it: nay ſo very publick a merchandize did they make of their religion, that they were not aſhamed to confeſs in the moſt public manner, that their diſcontinuance of it was becauſe there was nought to be got by it.

In theſe ſcandalous ſentiments we find the Jews in Egypt reproaching Jeremiah with the ſlavery and unprofitableneſs of their old religion, and telling him in plain terms that they had ſhook hands with it for that and no other reaſon. *Then all the men which knew that their wives had burnt incenſe to other gods, and all the women that ſtood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, and in Pathros, anſwered Jeremiah, ſaying, as for the word that thou haſt ſpoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken to thee, but we will certainly do whatſoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incenſe unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out our drink-offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes in the cities of Judah, and in the ſtreets of Jeruſalem; for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well and ſaw no evil: but ſince we left off to burn incenſe to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings to her, we have wanted all things, and have been conſumed by the ſword and by the famine, and when we burnt incenſe to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink-offerings to her, did we make her cakes to worſhip her, and pour out our drink-offerings unto her without our men*[r]?

[r] Jer. xliv. 15.

The

The laſt words fix the whole of this remonſtrance bold and termagant as it is, to their wives and their women, and ſuggeſt an influence, they were not it ſeems, aſhamed to boaſt of; but this remonſtrance is one more proof of their extreme corruption, when even their women had deviated from the piety and tenderneſs of their ſex, and were acting a part agreeable enough to their degeneracy, but contrary to their nature.

And from ſome ſuch language and behaviour as this, we may hope to come at the truth of a very extraordinary character in the performance under enquiry, and that is Job's wife: a character that ſometimes, has been treated with a kind of pleaſantry but ill ſuited to the place it ſtands in, and at others, with a ſerioufneſs that has little other foundation than ignorance; for it is the want of attention to the conduct of this whole allegory, that has given birth to all the miſtakes about this matter; for the literal interpreter has been buſied all along to find out her name, her country and her religion, and with all the preciſion of a lawyer, to aſcertain Job's property in her; whilſt the allegoriſt has been but too little concerned about any ſuch perſon, and thought himſelf at liberty to make his own uſe of the character.

Were I diſpoſed to purſue the former plan, and to enter upon a ſet diſcuſſion of her country or name, I ſhould conjecture that it was neither Dinah, as the Chaldee Paraphraſt calls her and the Rabbins after him [f], nor yet Raſimah according to the eaſtern fable, nor was ſhe an Arabian as the LXX inſinuate in their addition, taken from the ſyriac copy [t]; I ſhould rather be inclined to think her name if ſhe had one, was Hepſibah, for ſo the author of *the book of Kings* calls Hezekiah's wife [u], or as Joſephus calls her, Achibah, and adds, that ſhe was a citizen of Jeruſalem [w]; what in deed her character was we have but little light from hiſtory, but there is a circumſtance or two, not much to her advantage, to be collected from it, which I ſhall juſt mention, and leave with the reader to judge, whether put together, they might not be grounds ſufficient to juſtify the author's building ſuch a fiction upon as this.

[f] Philo ille aliquoties memoratus, & Chaldæus Paraphraſtes ſtatuunt Jobi uxorem fuiſſe Dinam, quod Judaicum omnino eſt commentum. Fr. Spanh, *Hiſt.* Job. p. 282.

[t] Ααζων δε γυναικα Αραβισσαν γενα υιων, &c. LXX. ad calcem libri Job.

[u] 2 Kings xxi. 1. [w] Μανασσης εκ μητρος Αχιβας τουνομα πολιτιδος γεγονως. Joſ. *Ant.* L. x. c. 3.

In

In that deſperate ſickneſs of Hezekiah's, commentators are agreed, there was ſome domeſtic affliction or other that inflamed his complaint, and rendered him ſo very deſponding as he is there repreſented: Joſephus thinks it was the apprehenſion of leaving his crown without an heir [y], an apprehenſion very unworthy in thoſe moments, of ſo wiſe a prince as Hezekiah, and but ill conjectured in a ſtate, which had God its-ſelf for its king, and which could therefore never be ſuppoſed to want an *anointed of the Lord* to govern it.

If he were married at that time, it redounds but little to his wife's honor, that in the very agonies of death, we hear not a ſingle word of any comfort adminiſtered to him from that quarter; if he were not, what we afterwards are told of Manaſſeh her ſon who came to the crown at twelve years old, that he was the wickedeſt prince that ever reigned in Judah, is a preſumption full as little in her favor, to whoſe ſhare the care of theſe tender years muſt of courſe have been aſſigned; and it is an obſervation of Joſephus's very ſingular in its kind, that Manaſſeh broke off from following his father's example and took the very contrary courſe [z], ſo that whoever he was indebted to for his ill principles, it was not Hezekiah, nor will it, if we vary but the experiment a little, demand the wiſdom of a Solomon to deſcry the true mother from the traces in the ſon.

I confeſs myſelf however but little ſolicitous about the fate of this conjecture, and only offer it in order to preſerve a likeneſs in his family, which had thus far ſo happily ſucceeded in Hezekiah's perſon: and ſhould it even be thought to be made up of that kind of reaſoning which proves *quidlibet ex quolibet*, I ſhall not think the little pains it coſt me, ill beſtowed, provided it give the reader a taſte only of ſuch kind of reaſonings, as have entered univerſally into all the literal ſolutions of this performance, and were I to preſent him with all the different names by which this wife of Hezekiah's is called in hiſtory, and they are not leſs than ſeven [a], I could produce him authorities for a catalogue full as curious, but not half ſo genuin, of the names both of Job's wife and his ten children, and with this ſingu-

[y] Τῃ δε νοσῳ προσεπιθεῖο ϗ ἀθυμια δεινη ὑπο τῳ βασιλεως, αὐτῳ την ἀπαιδιαν λογιζομενῳ, ϗ ὅτι μελλοι τελυτεῖαν ἐρημον καταλιπων τον οἰκον. *Ibid.* c. 2. [z] Ἀπερρηθειν μεν αὐτον των τῳ πατρῳ. ἐπιτηδευειν, ϗ την ἐναντιαν ἐτραπετο, παν εἰδος πονηριας ἐπιδειξαμενος. Ibid.

[a] Ἐψιβα, Ἀψιβα, Ὀφυβια, Οφεισβα. apud Geo. Syncellum. Ἐψιβααλ in 2^bus Bibl. exemp. Ὀφσιβα Bibl. reg. Ἀχιβας. Joſeph. Ἀιχιβας Cod. reg. ita libri regii pro voce nonnihil excusâ Echibene. Cotel. Pat. Ap. p. 230.

larity

larity attending it, that not one of the three daughters is called by the ſame name as in the *book of* Job [b].

But all I wiſh from this is, to ſuſpend a while the reader's deciſion of a point, which authors have by no means yet decided, the religion of this matron, for if Job himſelf has had the fortune to paſs for either a Jew or a pagan, as beſt ſuited each enquirer's ſyſtem, no wonder if his wife has ſhared the ſame fate too. Mr. Maundrell ſpeaks of a ſet of people in the holy-land, as he conceives, of a very ſtrange and ſingular character, for it is their fixt principle to adhere to no certain religion, but cameleon-like, put on the color of the religion whatever it be, which is reflected on them by the people with whom they converſe: with Chriſtians they profeſs themſelves Chriſtians; with Turks they paſs for good Muſſulmans; and with Jews they paſs for Jews; ſuch Proteuſes in religion, that no body was ever able to diſcover of what ſhape or ſtandard their conſciences are really made [c]; and from the treatment ſhe has met with, one might almoſt conclude Job's wife to have been of the ſame complexion; at leaſt ſhe has been always made to ſpeak the very language pagan or jewiſh, which beſt anſwer the purpoſe of the reſpective authors.

All that we know of her, unleſs we take for genuin that ſpeech of hers in the LXX, which has not been received into the other copies [d], is comprehended in a very laconic, though ſpirited ſpeech of hers, *Doſt thou ſtill retain thine integrity? Curſe God and die*; a ſpeech worthy indeed of a Xantippe, to whoſe uſeful exerciſe of his virtue Socrates always owned himſelf obliged, but yet at the ſame time it would well enough become the mouth of a Jezebel: and little therefore is to be inferred from it, in ſupport of one concluſion or other as to her religion, if no other or better arguments can be produced to fix it.

The learned author of *the divine Legation*, &c. with no affected partiality to the ſex, appears very ſolicitous to ſhift off the reproach

[b] Pſeudo-Philo tradit ex Dinâ Jobum genuiſſe 14 filios & 6 filias, filiorum nomina, ante percuſſionem, fuiſſe Eliphaz, Ermoe, Diaſat, Philias, Piſſar, Zellud, Thelon; filiarum, Moru, Litaz, Seli, eadem fuiſſe liberorum noviſſimorum, quicquid diverſiſſima legantur nomina apud LXX. atque id genus *nugæ nugaciſſimæ* Fr. Spanh. Hiſt. Job p. 282.

[c] Maundrell's Travels, p. 13.

[d] Ἰδὺ, ἀναμινω χρονον ἐτι μικρον, προσδεχομενος την ἐλπιδα της σωτηριας μυ. Ἰδὺ γαρ ἠφανισαι το μνημοσυνον συ ἀπο της γης, υἱοι συ κ᾽ θυγατερες της ἐμης κοιλιας ὠδινες κ᾽ πονοι, ὡς εἰς το κενον ἐκοπιασα μεῖα μοχθων. συ δε αὐλος ἐν σαπρια σκωληκων καθησαι διανυκτερευων ἀ᾽ ὑθρις. κ᾽ ἐγω πλανητις κ᾽ λαιρις τοπον ἐκ τοπυ περιερχομενη, κ᾽ οἰκιαν ἐξοικιας προσεχομενη τον ἡλιον πολε δυση, ἱνα ἀναπαυσωμαι των μοχθων, κ᾽ των περιεχυσων με ὀδυνων, ἀι με νυν συνεχυσιν. LXX. ad Ch. II. 9.

of this ſpeech of her's from the jewiſh matrons, who were all it ſeems, examples of piety, tenderneſs and obedience, the natural product of the old ſimplicity of manners [e], and endeavours to faſten it upon pagan impiety, and idolatrous practice, which, when their prayers were to no purpoſe, taught the heathens to curſe their gods, and thought ſuicide in misfortunes not only right but laudable [f].

There is ſomething in truth paganiſh enough, in the ſentiment that drew from the learned author this concluſion, and a poet of their own has given it its full ſcope,

Cum rapiant mala fata bonos, ignoſcite faſſo,
Sollicitor nullos eſſe putare deos.
Vive pius, moriere pius, cole ſacra, colentem
Mors gravis a templis ad cava buſta trahet [g].

In vain to gods, if gods there are, we pray,
If with our lives thus wantonly they play:
Let the ſaint worſhip, ſtill relentleſs death
Regards not ſaints, nor minds the hallow'd breath,
To inmoſt ſhrines intruding fate will come,
And drag you from the temple to the tomb.

Tully himſelf pronounces upon the Epicurean's ſcheme, that if God be ſuch an one as they repreſented, *adieu to him* [h]! and Nemeſius a chriſtian biſhop and philoſopher, has the ſelf ſame ſentiment [i]; but both proceed upon principles very different from the poet, and indeed upon the ſelf ſame principles with an inſpired apoſtle, when he adopts that maxim of theirs, upon ſuppoſition that there was no ſuch thing as a reſurrection, *Let us eat and drink for to morrow we die* [k].

Little therefore I ſay, is to be concluded from this ſarcaſm of her's, in ſupport of her being a pagan, whatever may be inferred in ſupport of her being an idolater; the Jews wives in Egypt we ſee, were neither ſo very coy in their conduct, nor ſo very

[e] Div. Leg. Vol. II. p. 416. [f] *Ibid.* [g] Ovid. Lib. Amor. L. iii. Eleg. ix. [h] Deinde, ſi maxume talis eſt Deus, ut nullâ gratiâ, nullâ hominum charitate teneatur, valeat. Cic. de nat. Deor. L. I. *ad finem.* [i] Ἐι γαρ μη προνοει θεος, ουδε τιμωρειται, ουδε τοις ἐν πραξεσιν ἐπαθλα νεμει, ουδε των ἀδικημενων τας βλαβας ἀπειργει, τις ἀν ὐν ἐτι προσκυνησειε θειον μηδεν ἡμιν συλλαμβανομενον; Nemeſ. de nat. hom. p. 306. [k] 1 Cor. xv. 32.

chaſte

chaſte in their expreſſions, but they could well diſpenſe with the old ſimplicity of their manners, and utter blaſphemy upon occaſion, with a profuſion not to be exceeded by the moſt conſummate pagan; and it is very remarkable, that Anna the wife of the apocryphal Tobit, a very good and induſtrious Jew, as her huſband repreſents her, could by no means let ſlip an opportunity of much the ſame kind, that offered upon his being ſtruck with blindneſs, but reproaches him with all his former goodneſs, and inſinuates at the ſame time ſomething of hypocriſy in his caſe; *where are now thine alms, and thy righteous deeds? behold thou and all thy works are known* [l].

And if this were the character of the jewiſh matrons both in Nineveh and Egypt, I can ſee no reaſon for ſuppoſing any greater delicacy in their conduct at Babylon, nor any impropriety in putting if we found it neceſſary, this ſpeech of hers into one of their mouths upon this occaſion; not that the expedient ſhe ſuggeſted was, as the learned author ſuppoſes, ſuicide, but downright blaſphemy, and how far this would operate ſhe was proficient enough, we ſhall find, in the jewiſh law to foreſee, and ſecure enough of her point, in caſe Job complied, to ſave him the trouble of being his own executioner.

For againſt this particular crime the levitical law had an expreſs proviſion; *he that blaſphemeth the name of the Lord, he ſhall ſurely be put to death; and all the congregation ſhall certainly ſtone him, as well the ſtranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blaſphemeth the name of the Lord, ſhall be put to death* [m]. A ſhorter or more ſuccinct abridgment of this law, the whole hebrew code does not furniſh, than that which is comprehended in thoſe few words, *curſe God and die!* which how deficient ſoever they may beſpeak her in conjugal tenderneſs, betray no deficiency in her acquaintance with the Moſaic law; if they want any farther comment, there is a precedent upon record full to the point, where the counſel which Job's wife ſuggeſted, Ahab's carried into execution, and the unfortunate Naboth fell the very ſacrifice to Jezebel's rage, that Job muſt of courſe have fallen, in caſe he had complied with his wife's reſentments.

I choſe to inſtance in this particular ſtory, not ſo much to inſinuate a likeneſs in character, or to aggravate it, as to juſtify the tranſlation which our engliſh bibles have given of this paſſage in Job, and which appears ſo harſh to ſome writers, that great pains have been taken to qualify it into a ſofter meaning, and the word BEREC ren-

[l] Tob. Ch. ii. 14. [m] Levit. xxiv. 16.

dered *curſe*, been endeavoured to be reclaimed in ſome meaſure to its primary and ſtrict ſenſe, which the reader has been already told is *bleſs*.

And it muſt not be diſſembled, that the very learned Dr. *Grey*, to whoſe tranſlation of this book I confeſs, I pay an almoſt implicit regard, has given a turn of the qualifying kind to this paſſage, and thinks that inſtead of denying or curſing God, ſhe meant only to hint to him, that ſome other or different ſyſtem of virtue and religion was to be taken up upon this occaſion, that he had better now bethink himſelf of diſmiſſing all thoſe religious ſentiments, in which he had formerly conſidered God as the rewarder of man's virtue, and have done with all thoſe rigid maxims of piety; and look for no other reward of all his obedience, than the proſpect of death's ſhortly putting an end to him [n].

With all its abatements in point of harſhneſs, there is ſomething I ſhould ſuſpect, even in this repreſentation of the ſentiment, that ſavors greatly of impiety at leaſt, if it amount not to direct blaſphemy, and why the criticks upon this paſſage are ſo ſolicitous to ward off this charge from her, I cannot imagine; for what was it that the Devil ſtood engaged for, in the laſt conference with God, but that he would reduce Job before he had done with him, to downright blaſphemy, *to curſe him to his very face?* He had tried the experiment already, and failed in it in a variety of inſtances, the next inſtrument therefore he laid hold of, was his wife, from whoſe influence and addreſs he promiſed himſelf to compaſs, what he had hitherto miſcarried in by his own; and here once more, he ſhewed how right a judgment he had formed of the world, how delicate thoſe connections are which conjugal life contracts, how mutual its intereſts; there was no ſhocking the huſband's integrity, without firſt debauching the wife's virtue, nor could that be debauched by any leſs than infernal policy.

For this reſolution of the caſe, beſides the ordinance of the poem which abſolutely requires it, we have the authority of St. Baſil, who with all his flowers, I will juſt remark, has given a better account of the diſtribution of the incidents in the prologue, than any

[n] *Valere jubeas.* Non jubet Deum abnegare, non etiam blaſphemia impetere: ſed aliud ſyſtema eſſe concipiendum admonet de virtute, de cultu ſincero numinis, quaſi diceret, exolve te religioſâ iſta curâ, quâ hactenus Deum tanquam virtutis remuneratorem ſuſpexiſti. miſſa fac cuncta illa præcepta ſeveræ pietatis, & nullum alium fructum virtutis expecta, quam ut brevi ſub atrocibus hiſce & ignominioſis plagis miſerum tuum ſpiritum exhales. Grey in loc.

that

that have ſat down profeſſedly to do it; he obſerves and juſtly too, that when Satan was now at a loſs for further expedients, recollecting his antient cunning, he tried to ſhake this hero by ſpiriting up his wife to ſome impious and blaſphemous ſentiments; that ſhe impatient of ſo tedious a domeſtic affliction, went up to him, and clapping her hands at him upon what had befallen him, upbraided him with the fruits of all his virtue, and recounting his former proſperity, in order to make him the more ſenſible of his preſent calamities, objected to him, what a life thoſe maxims of his had brought him to, and how he had been rewarded for his ſacrifices; then follows a ſpeech of hers, which I forbear copying, and only add the concluſion of it to ſhew the Father's opinion of this matter, that it were better for him to make uſe of ſome *impious expreſſion* or other, that would by drawing down upon him the wrath of his maker and unſheathing his ſword, take him off at once from the world, than by continuing thus patient, to prolong both his wife's miſery and his own[o].

A very fair and deciſive account this is I apprehend, of this difficulty, and at the ſame time that it explains the conduct of the poem, enters with great acuteneſs into the ſenſe and emphaſis of this particular paſſage; but I have to add to this, that BEREC *curſe*, the very expreſſion made uſe of here, is the ſame with that in Jezebel's caſe in the *book of Kings*, where Naboth's impeachment was grounded upon a charge falſe indeed enough, of *curſing God and the king*[p], and death the legal puniſhment of blaſphemy, was inſtantly executed upon him; we ſhall ſcarce I ſuppoſe be concerned to qualify this expreſſion harſh as it is, into any other or milder ſenſe, becauſe the ſentence of the law has fixed it, and when the crime and its conſequence are both of them, mentioned in the ſelf ſame words in the place under examination, I know not how far the canons of criticiſm will be allowed to operate upon it, in direct contradiction to the letter of the law.

[o] Ουκ ἐχων τοινυν ὁ τι ποιησει λοιπον ὁ πολεμιος, ἐπι της ἀρχαιας ἐπιβουλης μνημην ἐρχεσθαι, καὶ την τῳ γυναικι διανοιαν ὑποσυρας εἰς ἀσεβη καὶ βλασφημον δι ἐκεινης σαλευειν ἐπειρασθο τον ἀθλητην. καὶ τι μεν πρὸς τον μακρον πονον ἀπαλοργησασα τῳ δικαιῳ παρισασθο, καλῳ νενευκυια, καὶ τας χειρας ἐπι τους ὁρωμενοις συσκηψασα, καὶ τους της ἐυσεβειας ἀυλῳ καρπους ὀνειδισασα, καὶ καλαλελοιπυσα μεν την παλαιαν ἐυθηνιαν των ὁικειων ὑποδεικνυσασα δε τα παροντα κακα, καὶ οἱον ἐξ οἱων ἐλαχε βιον, καὶ τινα των πολλων θυσιων ἐδιξασθο παρα τῳ δεσποτῃ μισθον.—καὶ ὁτι καλον ἐιη καὶ χρησιμον ἀσεβεσι χρησασθαι λογον ῥημασιν ἐαυτον της γης ἐκβαλειν, καὶ της τῳ κλισαντος ὀργης ἀκονισαντα ξιφος, ἡ διακαρτερησαι πρὸς τα δεινα των ἐν τοις ἀγωσι μοχθων ἐαυτῳ καὶ τῃ συνοικησῃ μηκυνειν. S. Baſil. Hom. xxiii. ſo too the LXX. Ἐιπον τι ῥημα καὶ τελευτα. Ch. ii. 9.

[p] 1 Kings xxi. 10.

Had this been conſidered, my learned friend the author of the *Eſſay on Virtue*, would have ſeen I think, this paſſage with leſs offence than it ſeems to have given him, and been led probably to think that viewed in this light, it hardly ſtood in need of that change of points in the original, which he has ſuggeſted in order to ſoften it [q]; not but I confeſs, if there appeared to me any ſuch neceſſity, his conjecture is the firſt I ſhould be for embracing, for the points I agree with him, may be changed without ſcruple, though I doubt whether the preſent tranſlation for the reaſon already given, can be altered without violence; the *antiphraſis* in the mean time, is certainly bold, but this hinders not the tranſlation being juſt, for in one inſtance we have ſeen the word BEREC, incapable of any other verſion, and I will juſt obſerve, that out of the five places in this book, where curſing or blaſphemy, properly ſo called, is ſpoken of, three of them have expreſſed it by BEREC, and thoſe three in the prologue, and the remaining two by CALAL, the word of the levitical law, and thoſe two are in the drama [r].

The preciſe meaning of this word was neceſſary to be aſcertained, before any tolerable judgment could be formed of this ſpeech its-ſelf of Job's wife, or any probable gueſs be made from it, as to her religion, and if what has here been offered towards ſettling that matter, be true, there can remain but little queſtion, that ſhe was of the ſame religion with her huſband, an Iſraelite it's true, but not *an Iſraelite in whom there was no guile*, but rather of the race of that Iſraelitiſh woman, whoſe ſon's blaſphemy gave birth to the very law itsſelf that was made *ex poſt facto*, againſt blaſphemy [s].

Yet an idolater ſhe certainly was, and ſo far I concur with the author of *the divine Legation*, &c. about her, but an idolater not by either birth or nature, but merely like thoſe jewiſh women in Egypt, by corruption; nor even this ſhould I have gathered from that diſtinction of his, that idolaters generally grew impious, but the people of God more ſerious and religious upon misfortunes, becauſe

[q] I know not whether a difficult paſſage in the book of Job may not be cleared up by a change in the conſtruction of it; *then ſaid his wife unto him, doſt thou ſtill retain thine integrity, curſe God and die.* ii. 9. the original is, BAREC ELOHIM VAMUTH; by changing the points which may be done without ſcruple, we might change theſe imperative verbs of the conjugation pihel into the participles benoni of kal, and read it BOREC ELOHIM VAMETH (or indeed BAREC is itſelf the benoni of kal, though this form is leſs uſed than the other) if then we underſtand this to be ſpoken interrogatively, we might tranſlate it, *does he that bleſſes*, or *that worſhips God even die?* Rutterforth's *Eſſay on Virtue*, p. 370. *notes.*

[r] Ch. i. § i. rr. ii. 9. iii. 1. xxiv. 18. [s] Lev. xxiv. 11.

I conceive that this was not their general character, but from a very different principle, becauſe I found her ſpeaking the ſame bold language with the deſperate idolatrous Jew, and ſpiriting up Job in a ſtrain, very different indeed from the primitive ſimplicity of a hebrew matron, but exactly conformable to the impatience of a jewiſh captive.

There is a prophecy of Iſaiah's, which conveys an idea of their behaviour upon ſome calamity or other that was to befall them, very different from either ſerious or religious; and which looks like indeed enough to blaſphemous; *and when they ſhall ſay unto you, ſeek unto them that have familiar ſpirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter, ſhould not a people ſeek unto their God? ſhould the living ſeek unto the dead? to the law and to the teſtimony: if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them; and they ſhall paſs through it hardly beſtead and hungry, and it ſhall come to paſs that when they ſhall be hungry, they ſhall fret themſelves, and* curſe their king and their God *and look upwards, and they ſhall look unto the earth, and behold trouble and darkneſs, dimneſs of anguiſh, and they ſhall be driven to darkneſs* [u].

The prophet is here warning the Jews, who had ſo much better doctors of their own, not to give heed to thoſe idolatrous ſuperſtitions of their neighbours, in conſulting wizards and familiar ſpirits, but upon all occaſions to appeal to their own ſcripture, and to make that the teſt and ſtandard of their behaviour; ſtill he foreſaw that mixed as they were now growing with the heathens, they would of courſe run all the lengths of heathen idolatry, and the moment they conceived themſelves forſaken by their God, would take the opportunity of deſerting him, and as ſoon as they grew pinched with hunger, would bid defiance at once to providence, and curſe God and their king, with all thoſe outragious expreſſions of eyes and hands lifted up to heaven, to call upon the very gods they were curſing, to bear witneſs to their blaſphemy.

To ſee this prediction in its true light, we are to conſider the ſcene of it laid in ſome very calamitous ſituation of the jewiſh affairs, when that republic was manifeſtly upon the decline, and the prophet could not but foreſee that its diſſolution was inevitable; and what conjuncture ſo probable as the Babyloniſh captivity,

[u] If. viii. 19.

which

which was attended with preſſures ſo grievous and conſequences ſo ruinous to it? Piſcator therefore fixes this prophecy preciſely to this period, though I think he is miſtaken in Zedekiah's being the king whom they curſed, becauſe God and the king in that ſtate, were one and the ſame perſon, and blaſphemy therefore was conſidered as high-treaſon; and though Vitringa extend it down to the final deſtruction of the Jews by the Romans[w], he allows it to regard the Babyloniſh captivity incluſively; but if we take into the account the firſt verſe of the next chapter, which indeed ſhould properly be the laſt of this, there appears ſome little dawning of hope, that but ill agrees with their final deſtruction, and ſeems rather to promiſe ſome revolution or other in their favor.

In a ſituation thus wretched, Iſaiah introduces a deſponding Jew, deſtitute of all grace and comfort; one that had all along rejected the pure word of God with contempt; loſt to all hopes about the preſent ſtate of things, and in all the doubts and difficulties of ſcepticiſm about any other or better; ſurveying as it were, the gates of heaven ſhut againſt him, and nothing to be expected on earth to relieve even the ordinary demands of nature; in all the hurry and confuſion of ſuch ideas, ruſhing at laſt into his maker's preſence, and in abſolute deſpair ſetting him at open defiance; a picture, whatever we may have conceived of it, that promiſes fair enough for the original of that under our preſent examination.

And ſtill there is a circumſtance, which regards the economy of the poem, to which ſome attention muſt be paid, before we can pronounce any thing with certainty upon this point, and that is not ſo much the introducing ſuch a character at all into the performance, as the introducing it in the ſhape and in the ſex it appears in, and this we ſay, was but neceſſary to give the performance that integrity which a drama requires.

For ſhades being full as requiſite in poetry as in painting, there was a plain neceſſity, that ſome ſuch character ſhould make its appearance, in order to ſet off the hero of the poem to proper advantage; a drama without a ſingle woman appearing in it, had been a very ſingular one indeed, and not I believe, to be matched in any dramatic compoſition antient or modern, and it had been as great an offence againſt decorum as againſt the proverb, not to have inte-

[w] Vitringa. in loc.

reſted

reſted Job's wife in the plot, when both he and his ten children are intereſted in it, and indeed are the proper ſubjects of it.

But neither was the bare introduction of the character enough to anſwer the poet's ends, but a vicious one it was to be, in order to have a proper effect in adding luſtre and dignity to his hero; for thus far the image was all ſoberneſs and patience, there was nothing at all amiſs, either in the economy of his houſehold, or in the conduct of his ſons or daughters, whatever apprehenſions he entertained of them, yet all this ſoberneſs and virtue contributed but little all the while to a dramatic repreſentation, how much ſoever it might contribute to the beauty of the figure: ſome ſhades of courſe were to be thrown into the piece, in order to raiſe and round the figure, and to make the coloring ſtill more beautiful, by making it leſs glaring.

Were this incident therefore a meer fiction, inſerted only to aggravate the diſtreſs of the poem, and conſequently to improve the hero's conduct under it, whatever it might want in hiſtory, it wants not either nature or propriety to juſtify it; for a pious good man reſigned and patient, under all the ſevereſt ſtrokes of fortune, is at beſt in painting, but a piece of ſtill life, a figure we are apt to view perhaps with approbation but not with much emotion: but a pious good man, perſecuted by the devil in ſo many ſhapes, and afterwards reproached for all his piety from a quarter, he had ſo little reaſon to expect it from, affords ſcope enough for both the painter and the poet.

But the truth is, that in a ſcenic repreſentation, a character ſo very reſigned and ſtill could have had in reality no effect at all, or no other at leaſt than a bare ſoliloquy could produce, nor could the compaſs of a drama have been filled by any means with ſo patient unactive a perſon; it called of courſe for more characters to be brought into it, to give it either ſpirit or converſation, and for more diſtreſs from ſome or other of them, to give vent to its hero's expoſtulations and ſet forth his virtue; the introducing of his wife, the partner of all his cares, into the ſcene, did the buſineſs, and her counſelling him to an expedient ſo very ſhocking to all virtuous ſentiment, was a circumſtance which was of all others the moſt embarraſſing, and which added to the devil's machinations againſt him, contributed to raiſe the reputation he had hitherto ſupported of patience, to the very higheſt pitch.

Not that this incident is entirely fictitious, for that the reader has been in ſome meaſure prepared againſt already, but there is a degree of fiction in it, that ariſes of courſe out of the allegory, and which will preſently be found to be very conſiſtent with it; in the mean while, let me juſt take him back to a parable in Ezekiel, which at the ſame time that I think it calculated to give him ſome idea of the character its-ſelf, will very fully juſtify the author of the book of Job in the liberty he has taken with it, and vindicate his pitching upon that particular ſex; for conveying impreſſions unworthy indeed enough of it, but ſtill ſuch impreſſions, as its degeneracy at that time ſuggeſted, or the prophet at leaſt thought proper to attribute to it.

It is that, where under the feigned names of two ſiſters Aholah and Aholibah, he upbraids the two cities of Samaria and Jeruſalem, and in them the two kingdoms of Iſrael and Judah, with their monſtrous ingratitude, and their polluting themſelves with heathen idolatries; he compares their revolt from God, to the adultery of thoſe two ſiſters, to their proving falſe to the bed of a kind indulgent huſband, and under the figure of their incontinence, expoſes the wantonneſs of both thoſe people; pride, fulneſs of bread and idleneſs he tells them, had been the ruin of them as they had been before of their ſiſter Sodom, that ſuch was their lewdneſs, that the very pictures they had ſeen of the Chaldean captains, cloathed with blue and riding on horſes, they had fallen in love with, and had deſerted the embraces of a tender huſband for the unchaſte careſſes of a foreign gallant [x].

Such was the portrait of jewiſh apoſtacy in thoſe days, drawn too upon the very ſpot by no inconſiderable a maſter, who no doubt had nature corrupt indeed enough, for his original; and why the author of the book of Job might not copy him, I ſee no reaſon, but were it not anticipating my deſign, could produce I believe, a very competent one why he ſhould; the only uſe however that I ſhall make at preſent of the portrait is, that there is full as little liberty taken, by the poet as by the prophet, and in fact no more impropriety in ſhadowing the ten tribes of Iſrael under the ſeven ſons and three daughters of Job, than the two kingdoms of Iſrael and Judah under the two ſiſters Aholah and Aholibah.

[x] Ezek. xvi. and xxiii.

And

And this conſidered, we are now approaching towards a nearer acquaintance with the character, we have been ſo long ſeeking after, and ſhall diſcover at laſt or I am much miſtaken, the prieſt as well as the woman in this plot; the ſeven ſons of Job we have been told, were the ſeven tribes carried captive beyond the Euphrates by Salmanezer, and the three daughters the three tribes, carried captive by Tiglath-Pilezzer, there remain therefore only Judah and Benjamin to complete the number, but theſe two are the very Job of the poem; and where then could our author match his hero ſo conſiſtently with this diſpoſition, as in the tribe of Levi, that went captive with him to Babylon?

Servetur ad imum
Qualis ab incepto proceſſerit, & ſibi conſtet.

Neither was ſuch a match as this, the meer effect of poetic licenſe; for in the early ages of the world, marriage between brothers and ſiſters, was not only allowable but abſolutely neceſſary: the patriarchs took to wife their nieces or even their ſiſters, to avoid all mixture with their idolatrous neighbours, and for the ſame reaſon the Jews married within their own tribes, ſo that there could be no ſuſpicion of inceſt in the caſe upon the primitive plan, and as little upon the jewiſh, when we conſider the intermarriages of the tribes, and that the tribe of Levi in fact, was not one of the twelve, but in conſequence of their father's ſentence, ſcattered over all Iſrael, having no ſhare in the diviſion of the land of Canaan.

But to lay no more ſtreſs upon this conjecture than it will bear, I muſt freely confeſs, that if no other argument offered its-ſelf than what may be inferred from the nature of the compoſition or the conduct of the allegory to ſupport it, though they form a very ſtrong preſumption in its favor, yet I ſhould hardly venture to decide upon the point from them, without ſome collateral evidence to juſtify in the firſt place, ſuch a cloſe alliance between theſe two tribes, and in the next, to authenticate the language of Job's wife, Levi's repreſentative, as I take her to be.

How the matter of the alliance ſtood, we have a very clear account in the book of *Chronicles*; upon the revolt of the ten tribes under Jeroboam, all communication between the two kingdoms of Judah and Iſrael was at an end, the ten tribes liſted under him, and the two

tribes continued under Rehoboam; hitherto the Levites were diſperſed, as indeed the nature of their office required, among all the twelve, but upon this diviſion, Jeroboam we are told, took occaſion to treat them in a manner that they were as little diſpoſed to brook, as they were abſolutely obliged to reſent, for having erected altars and temples in the high places, he reſolved to ſuit his prieſts to his deities, and made prieſts of the loweſt of the people, *not of the tribe of Levi.*

Upon this, the tribe of Levi offended at his treatment of them, and at his taking a ſtep ſo ruinous to their religion, left their ſuburbs and their poſſeſſions, and flocked one and all, to Rehoboam out of all their coaſts, and ſtrengthened the kingdom of Judah, becauſe *Jeroboam and his ſons had caſt them off from executing the prieſts office unto the Lord*[y]; henceforward they fell under the ſole dominion of Judah, and were indeed a very conſiderable acceſſion to it, and down to the Babyloniſh captivity had no government or polity of their own, but went all along with Judah, ſhared the ſame fate with it in the captivity, and returned again along with it after the expiration of the ſeventy years[z]. An alliance accidental enough, but cemented by the conſideration of one common intereſt, and endeared by the conjugal ties of common affection[a]; an alliance ſo early commenced between the two tribes, that Aaron their high prieſt, took to wife Eliſhabah the daughter of Aminadab of the tribe of Judah[b]; ſo little foundation has the practice of monkiſh celibacy, in primitive prieſthood.

And connected thus cloſely to a tribe, devoted more immediately to the altar and ſervice of God, Judah might well have promiſed its-ſelf ſome very extraordinary benefit from the relation it had contracted, had its conſort only proved faithful; but the misfortune was, there was a conſpiracy of its prieſts againſt it, and thoſe lips that ſhould have preſerved knowledge, and thoſe very mouths at which the law of the Lord was to be ſought, were the firſt that opened to blaſpheme the covenant of Levi, and cauſed many to ſtumble at the law; the people we have heard blaſpheming, both men and women, the prophets foretold they would blaſpheme, the moment they were pinched, and we ſhall now find the prieſts fulfilling the prophecy on their part.

[y] 2 Chron. xi. 14. [z] Ezr. i. 5.
[a] Conjugatæ fuerunt tribus Levi & Judæ. Huet. Evang. Dem. Pr. xi.
[b] Exod. vi. 23.

Malachi

Malachi addreſſes his complaints of the profaneneſs and irreligion of the Jews, to their prieſts, and lays the fault where indeed it was but juſt to lay it, at their door. *A ſon honoreth his father, and a ſervant his maſter: if then I be a father, where is mine honor? and if I be a maſter, where is my fear? ſaith the Lord of hoſts unto you, O YE PRIESTS, that deſpiſe my name, and ſay wherein have we deſpiſed thy name? ye offer polluted bread upon my altar, and ſay wherein have we polluted thee? in that ye ſay the table of the Lord is contemptible;——who is there even among you that would ſhut the door for nought? neither do ye kindle fire on my altar for nought: I have no pleaſure in you ſaith the Lord of hoſts, neither will I accept an offering at your hands* [c].

And when they had once got to ſo ſcandalous a pitch of merchan- in their religion, that they profeſſed to have no other motive to act upon than their intereſt, and ſtood ready for every market, no wonder if they adopted the mercantile language as well as its principle; and ſo in fact they did, for God complains by the mouth of his prophet, *your words have been ſtout againſt me, and yet ye ſay what have we ſpoken ſo much againſt thee?* then he tells them plainly, *Ye have ſaid, it is vain to ſerve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hoſts? and now we call the proud happy: yea they that tempt God are even delivered* [d]; as he had told them before, *Ye have wearied the Lord with your words, yet ye ſay wherein have we wearied him? when ye ſay, every one that doeth evil is good in the ſight of the Lord, and he delighteth in him, or where is the God of judgment* [e]?

Such was the bold inſinuation of the profane wretch, whom the ſacred author has given Job to wife; *then ſaid his wife unto him, doſt thou ſtill retain thine integrity? curſe God and die!* an inſinuation, that Job himſelf with all his patience, might have dropt, if we may believe Elihu [f], and that ſhews her to have entertained much the ſame ſentiments of religion with her huſband. And if this come not up to the point, in the opinion of the attentive reader, I ſhall deſpair of ever ſeeing any ſatisfactory account of this matter, for at the ſame

[c] Mal. i. 6, &c. [d] Mal. iii. 13. [e] Mal. ii. 17.

[f] *What man is like unto Job, who goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men, who drinketh up ſcorning like water? for he hath ſaid, it profiteth a man nothing that he ſhould delight himſelf with God*, Ch. xxxiv. 9.

time that the ordinance of the poem, the ſtructure of the allegory and the winding up of the incidents require it, there is hiſtory to juſtify, analogy of language to authenticate, and facts to confirm our application of this character, to the tribe of Levi. A tribe degenerated from the maſculine virtue of its anceſtors into ſoftneſs and effeminacy, like thoſe Greeks whom the poet characterizes as women rather than men.

Ἀχαιδες ἑ μεν Ἀχαιοι.

Yet there is no diſmiſſing this point without paying ſome reſpect to a conjecture of the author of *the divine legation*, &c. who to do him juſtice, reſts not his concluſion of the paganiſm of Job's wife upon the ſingle iſſue of the language aſcribed to her, but in ſupport of it, has ſuggeſted a very beautiful alluſion; this character therefore he ſuppoſes introduced to give the Jews an uſeful leſſon againſt a practice, which about the time of their return from their captivity, had gained great ground among them, of taking ſtrange wives of the idolatrous nations round about.

And this ſays he, ſoon became a crying enormity: their prophets awaked them with the thunder of the divine vengeance, and their rulers after their return from their captivity, improved their penitence to a thorough reformation. *Judah*, ſaith the prophet Malachi, *hath dealt treacherouſly, and an abomination is committed in Iſrael and in Jeruſalem: for Judah hath profaned the holineſs of the Lord which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a ſtrange God* [g]. The ſacred writer therefore, who compoſed the book for the uſe of thoſe people repreſented under the perſon of Job, could not better characterize them, than by making Job's wife an heathen and the author of ſuch wicked council [h].

With regard to her being the author of ſuch wicked council, the reader's time has been but ill employed, if e'er this their refractory language upon this occaſion, has not appropriated it to the Jews, and fully reinſtated her in jewiſh property; with regard to the alluſion here ſuggeſted, I have the ſame exception to it beautiful as it is, that has been already taken to the date he gives his allegory, the time of their return from their captivity and the eve of their reſettlement in Judea: which I have before remarked, is premature for the drama,

[g] Mal. ii. 12.

[h] Div. Leg. Vol. II. p. 520.

and

and hope with the preparation the reader has already had for it, to fix it ſome where or other within the captivity.

In the interim let me juſt obſerve, that in this as in moſt other inſtances of the Jews corruption, they were indebted to their prieſts for ſo baſe a precedent; one of the ſons of Joiada the ſon of Eliaſhib the high-prieſt, was publickly convicted of this crime before Nehemiah [i]; ſo that upon the whole, the wife we have given to Job in our account of this matter, and the wife which the learned author has aſſigned him, are neither ſo very different in complexion nor principle, as at firſt ſight might have been ſuſpected: paganiſh indeed enough yet no pagan, and idolatrous too, but not *an arrant idolater*.

But offenſive as this character is, great amends are made for it in the contraſt one of her huſband, nor were impreſſions ſuch as ſhe ſet out with, to be propagated without reproof, for that had been equally offenſive to all decorum; the ſacred author therefore has taken occaſion to throw in one of the nobleſt reflections, upon the mixture there is of good and evil in the world, and in order to balance the wife's profaneneſs, has inhanced Job's piety; *Thou ſpeakeſt* anſwered he, *as one of the fooliſh women; what! ſhall we receive good at the hands of God, and ſhall we not receive evil* [k]? a reflection worthy of a chriſtian confeſſor.

Here again, his virtue to all appearance, ſtands upon its old principle, impregnable alike to Satan's artifice, and his wife's addreſs: far from falling into the leaſt diſorder upon ſo round a charge, or retreating into the ambuſcade which was formed for him, he maintains his ground with ſurpriſing ſteadineſs, and retorts the council his wife gave him, with a ſerioufneſs and ſeverity too, which the occaſion juſtified; ſhall we ſays he, the peculiar people of God ſhrink upon affliction? that were an impiety that might well enough become an heathen, a cowardice that but ill becomes a Jew; the good that we have been all along receiving, it is more than probable we have not deſerved, the evil that he now ſends upon us, whatever our deſerts are, may be calculated for ought we know, to anſwer ſome or other of the wiſe ends of providence in his government of the world. Be that as it will, this is certain, that take things in the beſt light, our impatience can avail us nothing here, our blaſphemy muſt undo us here and hereafter too.

[i] Nehem. xiii. 28. [k] Ch. ii. 10.

A ſtoic philoſopher would have reaſoned no doubt, upon very different principles, and drawn the concluſion that would have led directly to ſuicide: Job's wife was at the ſame work it muſt be ſaid, but hoped to come at the end in form of law, which ſtoiciſm came at with leſs ceremony, and had Job been now the weak or the wicked man ſhe inſinuated, the opportunity was inviting enough to have put an end at once to all his miſery, in the way ſhe had paved for him, but neither afraid to die, nor yet aſhamed to live, he choſe the better part, and inſtead of that phlegmatic ſpeech of Brutus's, the diſgrace of his philoſophy [l], interpoſed only a moral reflection.

And herein ſays a very ingenious author, they are in extremes, who allow a man to be his own ſuicide, and ſo highly extol the end and ſuicide of Cato: for indeed this is not to fear death, but then it is to be afraid of life; it is a brave act of valor to contemn death, but when life is more terrible than death, it is then the trueſt valor to dare to live; and herein hath religion taught us a noble example, for all the valiant acts of Curtius, Scævola or Codrus do not match or parallel that one of Job [m]. What pity that ſuch an example ſhould be ſo ſhort lived, as not to ſurvive the prologue!

At the cloſe of this incident, there occurs again an obſervation that *in all this Job ſinned not with his lips*; an obſervation, which confirms the account already given of that matter, that it is not ſo much deſigned to do honor to Job's conduct under this temptation, as calculated to keep the parts of the prologue diſtinct from each other, and to point out to the reader the ſeveral ſtages of his temptations, and at the ſame time to prepare him for ſome very different character, ſilent and patient as he hitherto finds him.

Not but upon the face of his ſtory thus far, his behaviour well deſerved ſo ſolemn a teſtimony, but that the ſtory its-ſelf vouched ſufficiently without the comment; for perſecuted as the hero was, in his family and in his fortunes, yet neither upon the firſt, ſecond or third attack upon them, did his integrity fail him, his wife with all her influence, had not extorted one unbecoming accent, nor Satan with all his cunning, drawn from him a ſingle word that might arraign the goodneſs or impeach the juſtice of his maker; to theſe he had been hitherto proof and traverſed all their Schemes with great adroitneſs. But the inſertion of this clauſe warns us not to flatter ourſelves

[l] Ὦ τλημων ἀρξῃη, λοιδορ ἀρ' εσθ. Εγω δε σε
Ὡς ἱερον ἀσκων. συ δ' εδυλευσας τυχη. Dion. Caſſ. Hiſt. Rom. p. 356.

[m] Brown's Relig. Med. p. 119.

what

with the long continuance of ſo reſpectful a ſilence; the prologue is now haſtning to a concluſion, and his lips are about to open with ſuch freedom, as will convince us, that his wife was better acquainted with the event than we imagined, and that if he fell not into the blaſphemy ſhe had ſuggeſted, it was rather to rob her of the credit of being the inſtrument of extracting it, than any perſeverance of his own at the bottom.

The diſcovery of this important ſecret was reſerved in truth, for the turning out of another which accordingly was the laſt, experiment that Satan tried upon him; for defeated as he plainly was, in the calamities he had brought upon Job's family, in the boil he had ſent upon his perſon, and in the council he had inſpired into his wife, not one or all of them ſucceeding to the point he had engaged for, that he ſhould *curſe God to his face*, his next reſource was to inſinuate himſelf amongſt Job's friends, and taking the advantage of ſome little family piques and reſentments, to make them the tools and miniſters of his own; diabolical practice!

Yet here with all his miſcarriages, Satan proved himſelf a complete maſter of the human paſſions; when after practiſing upon the conjugal virtues he betook himſelf to the ſocial affections; a love there is he well knew, *that paſſeth even the love of women*, chaſte and tender as it is, a love founded not ſo much in common intereſt as in common ſympathy, not to be purchaſed by the beſt kind offices, nor diſſolved by pique or jealouſy; could he once avail himſelf of ſtreams ſo pure as theſe, the fort he could not take by ſtorm he could reduce by ſtarving; at worſt it was but lodging his poiſon at the fountain's head that ſupplied it, and it muſt ſurrender he took for granted, at diſcretion.

Eliphaz therefore the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite are the three friends he pitches upon for this errand, and more proper for his purpoſe three perſons could not have been found, when we once become acquainted with them. The LXX, upon what authority it is hard to ſay, call Eliphaz, king of the Temanites, Bildad, prince of the Saucheans, and Zophar, king of the Mineans, and the Alexandrine M. S. adds that Theman ſon of Eliphaz was prince of Idumea, but St. Jerom has not this addition, and it is probably an error in the Alexandrine M. S[n]. The

[m] Ἐλιφαζ ὁ Θαιμανων βασιλευς, Βαλδαδ Σαυχαιων τυραννος, καὶ Σωφαρ ὁ Μιναιων βασιλευς. LXX. Ch. II. 10.

[n] Jackſon. *Belief of a future ſtate.* Append.

inſertion too of the LXX it is more than probable, was from an error in the margin of the ſyriac copy, that crept afterwards into theirs, for it is againſt the authority of the hebrew, and neither the ſyriac, chaldee nor arabic verſions, nor the beſt greek, have any ſuch inſertion, as may be ſeen in Walton's Polyglott [o].

In the apocryphal book of Tobit, there is an inſertion of the ſame kind, full as apocryphal as the book its-ſelf; and that is to be found in St. Jerom's latin tranſlation, and the words are theſe, *but this temptation the Lord ſuffered to befal him, that poſterity might have an example of patience in him as in holy Job*, and preſently after, *for as the kings inſulted the bleſſed Job* [p]. But as neither the greek, ſyriac nor hebrew copies have any ſuch words, and therefore our engliſh verſions have very juſtly rejected them, little or no ſtreſs ſhould be laid upon any ſuch inſertions contrary, as they plainly are, to the faith of the beſt copies.

Neither is this the only objection to them, for upon the face of theſe three friends ſtory, there is no pretence for ſuppoſing any regal dignity belonging to them; they appear to be plain and private characters, lay no claim to any ſuch pretenſions, though a very fair opportunity preſented its-ſelf to them, when Job laid ſuch mighty ſtreſs as he did upon his; as wiſe, as great and as antient indeed they do pretend to be, and ſo they were, but the point of dignity or precedence as kings, they never once diſpute with him: nor can there be any pretence for any ſuch claim, but that writers who upon the literal plan had made a king of Job, thought themſelves under ſome neceſſity of placing him in royal company: and that too at the expence of bringing thoſe kings from a diſtance, at leaſt very inconvenient, if not impracticable.

With regard to their religion, writers differ of courſe, as they did both as to Job's and his wife's: one of the Spanheims, whoſe hiſtory of Job, had he not confined himſelf too much to the letter is written with great acuteneſs of critical ſkill, lays it down that they muſt have been of the ſchool of Abraham, whoſe precepts muſt

[o] Illatio in Cod. Gr. eſt contra Hebr. Cod. fidem nec in Syrâ, nec in Arab. Paraph. conſpicua, ſic nec in probatiſſimis Gr. exemplaribus Compl. Rom. Reg. Oxon. aut Paris. et per ſe liquet fuiſſe marginalem notam in textum deinceps illatum. Fr. Spanh. Hiſt. Job i. p. 187.

[p] Tacemus jam teſtimonium de Jobo ejuſque amicis in Apoc. Tob. *Hanc autem tentationem ideo permiſit Dominus evenire ei ut poſteris daretur exemplum patientiæ ejus, ſicut & ſancto Job.* Et mox. *nam ſicut beato Job inſultabant reges.* Tob. xi. 12. 15. quæ tamen ſic exhibet verſio Lat. ut non Gr. non Syr. non Heb. non quæ ad has excuſæ ſunt Tremel. & aliorum. *Ibid.* p. 21.

have

have been diffuſed through the families of Nahor, Keturah and Eſau, ſome or other of whoſe deſcendants he conceives the three friends to be, and I agree with him; but that they were of the ſame religion with Job, or held any thing in common with the patriarchal diſpenſation, I have reaſons, and thoſe I apprehend, weighty ones too to doubt [q]; but thoſe muſt be reſerved a while, till that matter come more properly in iſſue, which it will do when the drama falls under conſideration, and the three friends are to be examined as the *dramatis perſonæ*.

The author of *the divine Legation*, &c. though he differ very widely from Spanheim in the matter of Job's religion, has fallen into the ſame concluſion as to the three friends, that they were of the ſame religion with Job, and conſiſtently enough with the hypotheſis he ſate out with, of the date of this performance, and with his own particular idea of the allegory ſuppoſes, that as the people of the Jews were repreſented under Job, theſe were their three capital enemies, who ſo much hindered and obſtructed the rebuilding of Jeruſalem and the temple, Sanballat, Tobiah and Geſhem [r]. But whether the Arabians, the Horonites and the Ammonites, for ſuch were the conſpirators, were preciſely of the ſame religion with the Jews is a queſtion.

Something indeed there is in their behaviour during the long debate with Job, that would tempt one to think them as the learned author ſuppoſes, worſhippers of the true God, for their ſentiments all along are worthy of ſuch principles, and nothing unbecoming the moſt devout regard for God and religion once drops from them; yet he himſelf has reconciled their condemnation by God in the cloſe of the drama, upon very different grounds, and that condemnation ſhould ſeem to forebode ſomething in their religion, not ſo very conformable to true religion, as their ſentiments ſuggeſt. But however that affair turn out, the conſpiracy formed againſt the rebuilding of Jeruſalem is much too late for having any thing to do with what I conceive, to be the true foundation of this allegory.

In the mean time, not to baulk the reader's expectations, he need be told only at preſent, that theſe three friends were in fact of Job's

[q] De religione & fide ſingulorum res etiam non obſcura; omino illi æque ac Jobus extra eccleſiam viſibilem & familiam Iſraelis non tamen gentilis eo ſenſu quo Idololatra, qui ſine Deo & ſine fide, imo verò Dei cognitione imbuti ac progreſſi ultra corruptæ rationis dictamina, & την ἀδιδακτην γνωμην. nempe ex Abrahami ſchola, a quo fidei & pietatis ſemina, quanquam haud altas radices actura, diffuſa in ipſas etiam Nachoris, Keturæ & Eſavi familias. *Ibid.* p. 478.

[r] Div. Leg. Vol. II. p. 522.

neareſt kindred, eſtranged indeed from him of ſome time, on account of ſome family broils and intereſts, but now introduced to be witneſſes to all his ſhame, the higheſt aggravation that could poſſibly have been added to his diſtreſs; that as to their religion, it was like all their conduct, the very antipodes of Job's, and if the poſterity of Eſau were idolaters, Eliphaz, Zophar and Bildad were idolaters too.

Here then is full ſcope for a dramatic entertainment; what Satan had not thus far accompliſhed by means of his wife, he brings about at laſt by Job's friends, and accordingly they are uſhered into the ſcene not like her, to act a ſhort part, but in quality of *dramatis perſonæ*, to ſuſtain each a ſeparate character, and the buſineſs of this interview, in which they profeſs to condole with him and to comfort him, is the ſingle incident which the poet works up into a drama; how happily he has ſucceeded is not yet the enquiry, becauſe there is a circumſtance or two ſtill remaining in the prologue, to be conſidered previous to that matter, which will give great light into the nature and buſineſs of the performance, and fix it to the very period we are contending for, the Babyloniſh captivity.

For upon the appointment made by the three friends to viſit him, each it ſeems *came from his own place, and when they lift up their eyes afar off and knew him not, they lift up their voice and wept, and they rent their mantles and ſprinkled duſt upon their heads*[r]; the firſt perſon they ſet their eyes upon, was their old friend and kinſman in the aſhes, but ſo unlike that they knew him not: that very Job whom they remembered in all his ſplendor, great alike in his court and in his camp, reduced now to a moſt wretched ſpectacle, his very perſon ſo filthy and diſfigured, that it was hard to diſtinguiſh him, like the deſcription Virgil gives of Hector's ghoſt.

Squalentem barbam & concretos ſanguine crines
Vulneraque illa gerens.
Hei mihi qualis erat quantum multatus ab illo
Hectore qui redit exuvias indutus Achillis[t].

Unlike the Hector who return'd from toils
Of war triumphant in Æacian ſpoils.
His hair and beard ſtood ſtiffen'd with his gore,
And all the wounds he for his father bore.

[r] Ch. ii. 12. [t] Virgil. Æn. II.

The

The whole of this interview is exactly pictureſque, and the attitude the friends are drawn in at ſome diſtance, holding up their hands and expreſſing all that concern as well as amazement, is to be equalled by nothing but the picture, that the pſalmiſt has drawn of them, which whether it be the copy or the original I am not I confeſs, connoiſſeur enough to diſtinguiſh, though if what has been already obſerved regarding thoſe pſalms be true, it is no great conſequence to come at any determination in the point; thus, *My lovers, and my neighbours ſtand looking upon my trouble and my kinſmen ſtand afar off, but as for me, I was like a deaf man and heard not, and as one that is dumb who doth not open his mouth, I became even as a man that heareth not, and in whoſe mouth are no reproofs* [u], *I held my tongue and ſpake nothing, I kept ſilence yea even from good words: but it was pain and grief to me* [w]. A ſilence on all ſides profound enough, to ſuggeſt the uſe which the ſacred author accordingly has made of it.

And this very ſituation of the captive Jew it is, that is ſo highly painted in the *Lamentations*, where under the figure of a diſconſolate widow bereaved of all her children, Judah is deſcribed bemoaning her captivity, and in the midſt of all her diſtreſs viſited by her kinsfolk and acquaintance, and inſulted in the room of being comforted by them. *How doth the city ſit ſolitary, how is ſhe become as a widow; ſhe that was great among the nations and princeſs among the provinces, how is ſhe become tributary* [x]*? ſhe weepeth ſore in the night, her tears are on her cheeks, among all her lovers ſhe hath none to comfort her, her friends have dealt treacherouſly with her, they are become her enemies: the ways of Zion do mourn, all her gates are deſolate, her prieſts ſigh, her virgins are afflicted and ſhe is in bitterneſs* [y].

Take this picture in Job then in any light, either as Hezekiah, or the Jews in this their calamity, or what is ſtill nearer the caſe, both together, never was there diſtreſs like this, never ſurely a more memorable event recorded in hiſtory, nor a more moving ſpectacle exhibited to mortal eyes; a prince venerable for his zeal and virtue, a people reſpectable alike for their policy and their religion; once the choſen people of God; ſacred in their moral character and renowned for their military conduct; reduced at once to the loweſt ebb of fortune, and from the higheſt pinnacle of mortal greatneſs, ſunk into contempt and deſpair.

[u] Pſ. xxxviii. 11. [w] Pſ. xxxix. 3. [x] Lam. i. 1. [y] Ch. iii. 25.

To

To complete their wretchedneſs, what conſideration half ſo embarraſſing, as an officious viſit ſo artfully contrived and ſo perverſely paid, from an unſincere friend, too glad to ſeize the opportunity of mortifying them upon their fall, not to take the privilege his alliance gave him, of introducing himſelf into their preſence? the very ſight of ſo cold a friend was ſufficient to alarm all their fears, and awaken all their antient jealouſies, but if to his coldneſs perchance he added inſolence, that were inſupportable.

Yet it muſt be ſaid, there looks ſomething like ſincerity and ſympathy too in this viſit, becauſe as ſoon as they heard of it, *they made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to weep with him:* and to ſhare affliction with a friend is in fact, to leſſen it, as *to weep with thoſe that weep*, is one of the tendereſt offices of humanity; had this been their errand, welcome indeed had they been to him, but it was not to ſooth, for that had been humanity, but to inflame his grief that they came, not to pour in oil into his wounds, but to open afreſh thoſe ſores of his.

At the very ſight therefore of three ſuch miſerable comforters, as he well knew they would prove, he takes fire, *for the thing which he greatly feared was now coming upon him*; and he had in truth but too good reaſon to be afraid of them: for they were the very perſons, whom in the full gale of all his proſperity, nearly related to him as they were, he had treated all along with inſolence and contempt, whom he owns he *would have diſdained to have ſate down with the dogs of his flock, children of baſe men viler than the earth*[z]. So tender was the language he had formerly beſtowed on them.

It was now become their turn to treat him with the ſame reſpectful language, and to retalliate upon him all his former inſolence; and therefore civil and humane as their viſit looked, he who knew their hearts, and was conſcious at the ſame time how little he was entitled to any mercy at their hands, falls as well as they into a ſullen ſilence at the firſt interview, and after brooding for ſeven days upon the gloomy proſpect of all his affairs, breaks out at laſt into downright blaſphemy and curſes the day of his birth. Satan had now gained his point, and accordingly we hear no more of him; henceforward the converſation is ſupported between Job and his three friends, and there is ſuch a ſcene of impatience, querulouſneſs and impiety on Job's ſide; expreſſions not bordering upon blaſphemy, but direct blaſphemy, not ſuſpecting but impeaching God's juſtice and goodneſs, as

[z] Job xxx. 1.

plainly ſhew, that how proper ſoever a repreſentative he is of the impatient Jew, yet that he is but ill conſiſtent with himſelf, and that Job in the *drama* acts a very different part from Job in the prologue.

But before we enter upon the diſcuſſion of that part of the performance, the reader poſſibly may think it a taſk incumbent upon us, to give ſome account of a difficulty, which from the Rabbins down to the lateſt adventurers in this province, has never yet received any tolerable explanation, and that is the ſeven days ſilence; an incident which were I diſpoſed to amuſe him only, it were no great labor to produce ſuch a whimſical collection of rabbinical and allegorical comments upon the ſubject, as would anſwer that end completely [a]; even the learned Le Clerc's ſagacity failed him in this inſtance: and he was drawn inſenſibly into an alluſion in this paſſage to the ſeven day's works of the creation, full as extraordinary as any of them [b].

And yet there is no paſſing by ſo very curious a conceit, as a late enquirer into this book, of whoſe talents in the allegorical way we have already had a ſpecimen, has ſtruck out upon this very incident, from whence he has conjectured, not ſo much that Job was a philoſopher, for that was a diſcovery it ſeems, made to his hands, but that he was by ſect a Pythagorean philoſopher.

His words are theſe, Job and his friends have been generally eſteemed philoſophers, and the remarkable circumſtance of their long ſilence, though very proper and ſuitable to the occaſion, might be taken notice of chiefly to point out what ſect of philoſophers they were of: the ſect *afterwards* called the Pythagorean being ſo remarkable for their profound taciturnity that they kept ſilence for ſome years together. A week's ſilence therefore is not at all to be wondered at in perſons of this tribe; though otherwiſe one would be apt to think that the writer made uſe of a figure, before he entered upon the *poetical* part of his work, ſince it can hardly be ſuppoſed how ſo many perſons could ordinarily refrain ſpeaking for ſo long a time [c].

For my own part, I ſee no neceſſity of taking one ſide or other of the learned author's dilemma; not the latter, becauſe I hope to ſhew that there is nothing *hyperbolical*, for that I preſume to be his

[a] Gerras jam non Siculas ſed Judaicas, paſſim apud Chaldeum & Orientales, de prodigiis quibus impulſi hi amici ad viſendum Jobum; de fortuito eorum concurſu; de *aſſiduo* toto ſeptiduo; & quæ id genus alia. Fr. Spanh. Hiſt. Job. 479.

[b] Quaſi cultoris Dei, qui ſeptem diebus omnia creavit: quo numerus ſeptenarius paſſim reſpicit. Cler. in loc.

[c] Worthington's Eſſay on Job, affixed to his Eſſay, &c.

figure,

figure, in ſuch a repreſentation; not the former, becauſe it might juſt as fairly be conjectured that Job was an Epicurean, and his wife a Stoic from the council ſhe gave and he rejected, or that the three friends were Academics becauſe they doubted, as that they were Pythagoreans becauſe they were ſilent; not but there will be a figure requiſite I agree with him, in the caſe, but then it is upon his own ſolution of it, and that is a *prolepſis*, and a bold one too of full four hundred years, the diſtance if I miſtake it not, between Pythagoras and Solomon, whom he ſuppoſes to be the author of this book; for the earlieſt date given to Pythagoras, is about the time of the Babyloniſh captivity.

It is true indeed, that it has been often ſuſpected, that Pythagoras had converſed with ſome Jews at Babylon at this time, and learned men have thence been led to obſerve a great reſemblance, between ſeveral of his ſymbols, and ſome precepts of the jewiſh law; but then the concluſion from all this, that ſeems moſt obvious, is that theſe ſymbols were borrowed from the Jews: and that if any thing was to be inferred from the reſemblance between the Pythagorean philoſophy, and the philoſophy inculcated in the book of Job, towards ſettling the date of the latter, the preſumption is that it was written much about the ſame time, not ſooner, becauſe it had not the Pythagorean ſchool to copy from, not later, becauſe it was received into the jewiſh canon preſently after.

What led the learned author into this miſtake, and it runs throughout his whole eſſay, appears to me to have been a reſolution at all adventures to make good his *hypotheſis*, that the Metempſychoſis of the Pythagoreans was the ſingle doctrine this book was written to confute, an *hypotheſis* which at preſent comes no farther under examination, than as it relates to the conduct of the three friends; and he remarks juſtly enough, that the doctrine commonly aſcribed to Pythagoras, is yet known to have been much more antient, and eſpouſed long before his time over all the Eaſt; ſo that his conjecture ſtands clear of the exception I have taken to it, in point of time.

But allowing all this, give me leave to obſerve, that how true ſoever this may hold of the doctrine and its earlier age, it holds not equally true of the diſcipline of Pythagoras; the five years ſilence was an impoſition merely arbitrary of his own, either to teach his diſciples modeſty and attention, or according to Clemens Alexandrinus, to abſtract their minds from ſenſible objects, and enure them to

to contemplations on the deity [d]; the doctrine therefore might be of longer ſtanding in the world than Pythagoras, but the diſcipline being an inſtitution peculiar to his own ſchool, muſt bear the ſame date with its maſter; and if ſo, the learned author's date of the book of Job in Solomon's time, will not eaſily be reconciled with it. And I ſhould as ſoon gueſs that the three friends were Civilians, from the old practice of one year's ſilence in their courts, as Pythagoreans from a five years *taciturnity*, eſpecially as they turn out at laſt advocates by profeſſion, and undertake the pleading of a cauſe, in which they will be found themſelves to have no intereſt.

And full as little weight with me, has that other ſuppoſition of this author, that the writer of this book made uſe of ſome figure in this inſtance, becauſe it can hardly be conceived how ſo many perſons could ordinarily refrain from ſpeaking for ſo long a time; yet here he is not ſingular, for it is an error that has paſſed through the whole tribe of criticks and commentators upon this paſſage, and Le Clerc again has laid ſuch ſtreſs upon this ſingle circumſtance, that it is one of his capital arguments for ſuppoſing this book a parable, that neither Job nor his three friends in all the ſeven days, either ſpoke a word or went to bed [e].

Now if the poſture be the thing that gives the offence, it is certainly without reaſon, for ſome ſuch poſture as the proper expreſſion of grief, the Jews had in common with the other nations of the world, either upon account of the death of their relations, or any great and extraordinary calamity that befel them: the firſt ſallies of it ſhewed themſelves in rending of the hair, tearing their garments, putting on ſackcloth and lying on the ground, and ſome even choſe to roll themſelves in the aſhes [f], ſo exactly has the ſacred writer copied the whole ceremonial.

[d] Τουτο δ' αρα βυλεται ιν τω Πυθαγορα ἡ της σιωπης, ἡν τοις γνωριμοις παραγγυα. ὡς δε ἀποτραφειλις των αἰσθηλων ψιλω τω νω τον θειον ἐποπλευσασιν. Cl. Al. Strom. V. p. 247.

[e] Après cela, Job demeure aſſis a terre ſur la cendre, & trois de ſes meilleur amis qui viennent pour le conſoler s'y aſſeyent auſſi avec lui, & demeurent tous en cet état ſept jour & ſept nuits ſans dire un ſeul mot.—Toutes ces circonſtances ſentent extrememement la parabole. comment peut-on demeurer dans une ſi grande affliction ſept jours entiers ſans ſe plaindre? ou ſi l'on peut etoufler ſon chagrin pendant un ſi long temps, ne ſemble-t-il pas qu'a la fine de ce terme, la douleur devroit être plus aiſée a vaincre qu'au commencement? des amis intimes peuvent-ils voir un malade, pour qui ils ont quelque tendreſſe, couchè a terre pendant ſept jours entiers, ſans tâcher de le faire mettre au lit, & ſans lui dire un ſeul mot? Outre cela, Job n'a pas plutôt ouvert la bouche. Sent. de quelque. Theol. Holl. p. 180.

[f] Αυλης ἐν χοϱοισι κυλινδομινω καλα κοϱπον
Hom. Il 24.
Ἑζομενοι δ' ἐπλαυθα γοων, τελλοντο δε χαλας
Hom. Od. 10.

Plutarch ſpeaks of Cato ſitting in this poſture, from the very moment that he was informed of the ſlaughter at Pharſalia, and mentions it as an inſtance of his great chagrin upon this event, that he never once laid down except he went to ſleep [g]; Virgil deſcribes a whole city ſate in the ſame poſture [h]; and in the *Lamentations* were read, *the elders of the daughters of Jeruſalem ſit upon the ground and keep ſilence, they have caſt duſt upon their heads, they have girded themſelves with ſackcloth, the virgins of Jeruſalem hold down their heads* [i]. An image the very ſame with Job in the aſhes.

If the ſilence or the number of the days produce the difficulty, this too without recourſe to figure or poetic licence, is to be reſolved from the ſame principles, for after the firſt guſt of paſſion had vented its-ſelf in their mourning, in tearing their hair, *&c.* the next ſhape it appeared in, was a ſullen ſilence, which they broke not for ſome time, and even when they did, it was only to utter groans and complaints, and this laſted about a week in general, but among the Jews in particular, ſeven days were the preciſe number of the days of their mourning [k]; ſo that there is nothing in either Job's, or the three friends conduct upon this occaſion, that is not exactly conſiſtent with this part of the jewiſh ceremonial.

Take the caſe of one of their greateſt and moſt pious princes upon a like misfortune, and ſee what was his behaviour under it. It is that of David upon the child being ſtruck with a mortal ſickneſs, that the wife of Uriah the Hittite bare unto him; how did this good man demean himſelf upon the occaſion? David *beſought the Lord for the child, and David faſted, and went in and laid all night upon the ground; and the elders of his houſe aroſe and went unto him to raiſe him up from the earth, but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them; and it came to paſs that on the SEVENTH DAY the child died; and when David was told that the child was dead, then David aroſe from the earth and waſhed and anointed himſelf, and changed his apparel, and came into the houſe of the Lord and worſhipped* [l].

[g] Ἐδιητᾶτο δὲ καθημενος ἀφ᾽ ἡμερας καὶα Φαρσαλον ἐγνω ἡτῆται, ἡ τὸ τέλο τω λοιπω παρασιθηκε ποιεῖ το μὴ καῖακλιθηναι, πλὴν καθευδων. Plut. vita Cat. M.

[h] ——— totamque videmus
Conſediſſe urbem luctu. Virg. Æn. II.

[i] Lam. ii. 10. [k] C'eſt la le nombre des jours que l'on employoit an deuïl parmi les Hebreux. Bibl. chois. Tom. xxiv. p. 35. compare Gen. l. 10. 1 Sam. xxxi. 13. Eccl. xxii. 12. [l] 2 Chr. xii. 15.

Why

Why he went through the whole ceremonial, before the child was dead and not after, is not now the queſtion, the only point to be cleared at preſent is, how many days he faſted and prayed and laid upon the ground, and the anſwer is obvious, ſeven days; for that he roſe not from it the next morning, or any other morning before the ſeventh is plain from the context, becauſe when the elders of his houſe went to him to raiſe him up, he would not, but on the ſeventh day, when the child was dead and not before, he aroſe and waſhed.

I am the more particular in this matter, becauſe I know not why, this incident has had the ill fortune to have been univerſally treated as ſomething out of nature, and accordingly great have been the pains taken to qualify it even to an air of probability, as if human nature could not ſubſiſt ſo long a time, under ſuch ſevere diſcipline, and the attitude its-ſelf of ſitting ſo many days in ſullen ſilence, carried in the very look of it, ſomething extremely ridiculous if not impoſſible; yet we ſee in David's caſe nothing of either, and had not a very late author, who fell into my hands ſince I quitted the ſubject, taken refuge in the figure, a refuge which to do him juſtice, he has not taken in many difficulties that he has greatly ſolved, I could very gladly have left that point as it ſtands, with the reader.

To imagine ſays he, that the three friends ſate on the ground ſeven days and ſeven nights, without ſpeaking a word, as they are repreſented to have done, and that afterwards they maintained a converſation in the ſtile and manner that follows, muſt argue a perſon unacquainted with the difference of language, and not fit to be reaſoned with. Eaſtern figure and hyperbole muſt here have an undoubted ſhare, and as it was neceſſary for the author to account for the manner how his hero came to be ſo afflicted, he hath done it according to the philoſophy of his own times[m].

This it muſt be confeſſed, from ſo candid a writer, is a remark very inauſpicious to any future ſolution of this matter, which if it ſhie not to eaſtern figure and hyperbole, is likely to bring it's author's ſenſe it ſeems, as well as his ſkill in languages into queſtion; yet unpromiſing as it is, I am of opinion that after all, it muſt be from the philoſophy of his hero's time and country, which has been ſhewn to be jewiſh, and from the very language in which that philoſophy is conceived, that this incident muſt be accounted for, and that the

[m] Coſtard's obſervations on the book of Job. p. 17.

more we have recourſe to figure, the farther off are we from coming at the true ſecret.

For what will the learned remarker think, if beſides the jewiſh ceremonial, to which this paſſage has been already adjuſted, the very circumſtance its-ſelf that probably gave handle to it, be recorded in one of the prophets, and Ezekiel prove at laſt the reaſoner he is in ſo much pain for? It looks in truth ſomething like it at leaſt, for when the prophet paid that viſit he ſpeaks of, to a colony of captives upon the river Chebar, he ſate down for ſeven days with them in ſilence full as profound as Job; *then came I unto them of the captivity at Tel-Abib, that dwelt by the river of Chebar, and I ſate where they ſate, and I remained* aſtoniſhed *among them ſeven days* [n].

The original word SHAMAM [o], rendered *aſtoniſh*, the learned author's known experience in the hebrew tongue, will readily point out to him the full import of, and it is uſed by Ezra after the ſelf-ſame detail of *rending his mantle, plucking off his hair*, &c. and there again tranſlated, *aſtoniſhed*; but then in both the texts, it is ſuch an aſtoniſhment they convey, as was attended with an utter ſilence and ſtupidity, with ſuch an obſtruction of all ſpeech, as either a ſudden ſurprize, or a ſettled amazement is apt to produce in a man. We admire therefore and juſtly too, that ſilence of Ajax's in Homer, and of Dido's in Virgil: the ſilence of Joſeph's brethren upon his diſcovering himſelf to them, is a circumſtance, that has been always looked upon as one of the greateſt ſtrokes of nature in his whole ſtory, when their confuſion was ſuch that *they could not anſwer him*; in the tumultuous hurry of the paſſions, words are at beſt but feeble expreſſions of what we feel, and ſilence then is more eloquent than all the language in the world.

And ſuch a profound ſilence, accompanied with all the gloomy reflections upon the wretchedneſs of their ſituation, and with all the melancholy ſigns of deſpair, has the pſalmiſt painted, drawn upon the very ſpot of the Jew's captivity; *By the waters of Babylon we ſate down and wept, where we remembered thee o Sion; as for our harps we hanged them up upon the trees that are therein; for they that led us away captive required of us then a ſong and melody in our heavineſs, ſing us one of the ſongs of Sion. How ſhall we ſing the Lord's ſong in a ſtrange land* [p]? the voice of joy and melody was now converted into

[n] Ezek. iii. 15. Schindler. Pentagl. Leg.

[o] SHAMAM. tacitè admiratus eſt. obſtupuit. ſiluit. conticuit.

[p] Pſ. cxxxvii.

the

the penſive ſtrains of groans and mourning, and to call upon them at ſuch a time for mirth, was adding inſolence to oppreſſion.

Nor is all this ſo much out of nature, as we are apt to conſider it; for it is the leſſer cares only that ſpeak, the greater ones find not language[q]: theſe lie preying at the breaſt, whilſt thoſe find a ready paſſage through the lips, and give themſelves a vent that diſcharges them; in proportion to the weight of them, they will ſink the deeper and continue too the longer, and it will be hard to fix a time, when grief once fairly in poſſeſſion of us, and rooted deeply in the heart, will be got the better of; ſilence is univerſally the firſt turn it takes, and retirement it's moſt obvious reſort: there the mind feeds upon paſt calamities with ſecret ſatisfaction, and enjoys the ſplenetic moments, with an indulgence often fatal to it, but ſtill in ſome degree, neceſſary to bring it to proper reflection.

Nature I take for granted, is much the ſame in this reſpect in moſt men, nor will the accidental circumſtances of a difference in country or religion, operate ſo very greatly upon the paſſions, but that they will break out into the ſame innocent expreſſions, upon the ſame provocations, and what a pagan felt a Jew might feel; nor was there ſo great a diſparity in their conſtitutions, but that the one was full as well calculated to ſupport a ſeven day's mortification, as the other, and what needs not an hyperbole in Oreſtes's caſe to juſtify it, will ſcarcely call for one in Job's to explain it. And yet in the prologue of his Oreſtes, Euripides has ventured upon a narrative of preciſely the ſame ſort, without any impeachment from the criticks, of either his veracity or propriety, which that due regard be paid to *the language*, as well as to the ſentiment of ſo diſtinguiſhed a dramatic writer, I chooſe therefore to give in his own words.

Ἐνθεν ἀγρια συνθακεις νοσῳ νοσει
Τλημων Ὀρεστης, ὁ δε πεσων ἐν δεμνοις
Κειται.
Ἑκτον δε δη τοδ' ἡμαρ, ἐξοτε σφαγαις
Θανασα μητηρ πυρι καθηγνισται δεμας,
Ὡν ὄυτε σιτα δια δερης ἐδεξατο
Οὐ λουτρ' ἐδωκε χρωτι, χλανιδων δ' εσω
Κρυφθεις, ὁταν μεν σωμα κευθισθη νοσῳ
Ἐμφρων δακρυει[r].

[q] Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes ſtupent. [r] Eurip. *Oreſtes*. Prol.

Here

'Tis hence Oreſtes agoniz'd with grief
And ſore diſeaſe, lies on his reſtleſs bed
Delirious. Now ſix morns have wing'd their flight,
Since by his hands his parent maſſacred
Burnt on the pile in expiatory flames.
Stubborn the while he keeps a rigid faſt,
Nor bathes, nor dreſſes; but beneath his robes
He ſkulks, and he ſteals a pauſe from rage,
'Tis but to feel his weight of woe and weep.

Here Electra comes and informs the audience, that Oreſtes upon the murder of his mother, had been ſeized with a frenzy and taken to his bed, and that this was the ſixth day ſince he had either eaten or waſhed. Nothing either ridiculous or unnatural in ſuch a ſtory. Job and his three friends upon the calamities, that had brought him and his whole houſe, to the very brink of deſtruction, is introduced in the prologue, afflicted with a ſevere diſeaſe, and we are told, that they and he *ſate ſeven days and ſeven nights upon the ground*; and what is there in ſuch a ſtory ſo very improbable? If it be the ſilence all that while that offends, ſuch an exception can ſcarce be ſerious, if it go upon the ſuppoſition of the impoſſibility of the thing; for in the ſiege of Jericho, Joſhuah's orders were, that *not a ſingle word ſhould proceed* from any of his ſoldiers mouths for ſeven days, and his commands were obeyed: here a whole army of men were ſilent for the very time, that Job and his three friends were, and yet for four perſons not to ſpeak in all this time is deemed hyperbolical.

It muſt be owned indeed, that ſuppoſing this incident to make any part of the *drama*, it had been ridiculous enough, nor could any thing more out of nature or character have been thought of, than for the *drama* to open with a ſeven day's ſilence: for as the author of the *divine Legation* very rightly remarks, had his friends not been indulged in their captious humor, the author could never have produced a piece of that integrity of action, which a ſcenic repreſentation demanded, and they might as well have held their tongues ſeven days longer, as not contradict when they did begin to ſpeak [f].

But however ridiculous it might have appeared in the *drama*, it has certainly great propriety and effect too, in the place where it

[f] Div. Leg. Vol. II. p. 487.

is

is in fact inſerted, and that is, in the prologue, the only uſe and buſineſs of which in all the antient tragedies, was we have been told, to open what had paſſed in the ſtory before the beginning of the play, in order to prepare the audience for it's reception; here the greek tragedian inſerts this ſtory of Oreſtes, and here for the ſame reaſon has the hebrew poet placed that of Job, both of them, to give ſuch impreſſions of their hero's diſtreſs, as would naturally alarm the expectations, and arm the audience for ſuch language as they fall into the moment they break ſilence.

SECT.

BOOK II. SECT. I.

THUS far the prologue only to this performance, has paſſed under examination, and if the pains have not been ill laid out, it ſhould ſeem that the Babyloniſh captivity is the ſubject of the book under enquiry; that the book its-ſelf is manifeſtly of the allegoric, and not of the hiſtoric kind; that the jewiſh republick is at the bottom of the allegory; and it's very particular circumſtances at this period, the ground-work of the whole prologue.

And this alone would furniſh a ſtrong preſumption, that what follows in the dramatic part, whatever aſpect it bears, ſhould relate to the ſame event, becauſe if the prologue be genuin, the converſation in the drama will turn of courſe, upon the facts recited in it, this being as was before obſerved, of the very eſſence of the antient prologue, to explain all that had paſſed before the opening of the ſtage.

The drama therefore and the *dramatis perſonæ* come next under our conſideration; but before we proceed to them, give me leave to recapitulate what has been already ſaid, with regard to the hero of this poem, that ſo we may come the better prepared to enter both into the characters of the reſpective diſputants, and the argument which they diſpute, which, if either of them prove foreign to the ſubject we have been contending for, will of courſe overthrow all our reaſonings; but if the argument turn out to be the very argument, that was not only the moſt natural for Job to maintain, in ſuch a ſituation, but the very argument the Jews maintained, in their captivity: and the diſputants prove not only the moſt likely but the very perſons, who were the teizers and perſecutors of the Jews at this criſis, then the performance will be ſeen in its full extent and beauty, and the contraſt characters of Job and the three friends ſhew, that if he were a Jew, it is more than probable, that they were idolaters.

That he was no *alien to the common-wealth of Iſrael*, but of the ſeed of Abraham, and of the poſterity of Jacob; that he was of the tribe and kingdom of Judah, or rather, that the whole tribe and kingdom of Judah are repreſented under his name and character; that his ſeven ſons are the ſeven tribes carried captive by Tiglath-pelezzer, and the three daughters the three tribes carried captive by

Salmanezer; that the tribe of Levi is ſhadowed under Job's wife; Hezekiah's paſſover under the feaſts; the Babyloniſh captivity under the fire, the whirlwind and the boil; that the deſcent of the Sabeans and the Chaldeans, and the ſeven days ſilence, are circumſtances, which conſidered ſeparately or collectively, confirm our application of the whole of this character to the Jews, and fix it to this ſingle period, are the topicks upon which the former book has been employed.

Who the three friends were is a point, to be collected much in the ſame way with that, which we have taken in coming at Job, not from any thing myſterious or technical in the names, but from ſome particularities in their ſtory, ſomething that is peculiar to them, and cloſely interwoven in their character, unapplicable to any other perſons, and inſeparable from themſelves; for in a work like this, it is not to be expected that the author would preſent the reader with real names or characters: that had betrayed great want of invention indeed; it is ſufficient that in the courſe of the drama, there be ſuch hints thrown out, as may draw him inſenſibly into their hiſtory, and the higher theſe are touched, ſo long as the likeneſs is preſerved, the higher notion will they give us of the ſacred penman's ſkill in the conduct of his allegory.

Not but ſome ſlight intimations who they were, are dropt in the very names he has given them, but theſe again are ſo vaſtly diſproportionate in point of time, to any age that has ever been aſſigned this book, that they rather inhance than ſolve the difficulty; thus for inſtance, Eliphaz the Temanite the firſt in the debate, and the principal character among the three friends, whether we conſider him in the relation he bore to Eſau, as a ſon, or in the relation he bore to Teman a city of Idumea, as an inhabitant, is very plainly an Edomite, but then carry back his name as high as Moſes places it, and ſuppoſe him to be the perſon, who bears a part in this performance, you give the book a date, which neither the philoſophy, the manners, nor the religion of thoſe early days will juſtify.

And ſtill this very circumſtance is no obſcure opening to the whole myſtery, for it has been intimated in the former book, that the three friends, who came to viſit Job in his affliction, were probably ſome of his neareſt kindred, and there are many paſſages in the progreſs of the diſpute between them, that very plainly beſpeak ſome ſuch relation; in the virulence too of the debate, ſome ſtrokes are levelled on both ſides, which carry with them very ma-

nifeſt marks of ſome old family grudges, which though they had gone well nigh to extinguiſh all affection, yet could not diſſolve the relation between them.

This particular well attended to, will lead us gradually to diſcover, that the three friends here introduced to be the witneſſes to Job's ſhame, and to reproach him upon his downfall, can be none other than the children of Edom, the neareſt of kindred to the Iſraelites, but at the ſame time, through a long ſeries of domeſtic broils and jealouſies, the moſt inveterate enemies their ſtate ever encountered, the very firſt and the laſt too, that it felt the weight of.

The founder of their family and kingdom was Eſau, who had been very early defrauded of his birth-right by his younger brother Jacob, the founder of the family and kingdom of Iſrael; the ſtruggling of theſe two infants in the mother's womb, was a timely preſage of ſome contention or other between them or their poſterity, and the continual conflict between the two families, ſufficiently vindicates the meaning of ſo very extraordinary a preſage.

From the very inſtant that Eſau was ſupplanted of his birth-right, his reſentments began to operate againſt Jacob, and ſuch was the hatred he conceived againſt him, that he took a reſolution of ſlaying him the firſt opportunity; and though Rebekah's council was, *that he ſhould fly to her brother Laban at Haram, and tarry with him a few days, until his brother's fury was turned away, and he ſhould forget that which had been done unto him*[a], yet he found himſelf wounded in much too ſenſible a part, to forget or to forgive ſo groſs an injury, and thought it was then impracticable to carry his firſt reſolution into execution, yet he kept it conſtantly in view, and his poſterity did the buſineſs. On the other hand, ſuch was the jealouſy of Jacob, that he apprehended, that even the great diſtance both of time and place, had not extinguiſhed his brother's hatred; inſomuch that upon his father's death, when he ſent meſſengers to Eſau to acquaint him with his approach, and received an anſwer highly civil and reſpectful, yet we find all his fears alarmed, and him praying to God, to deliver him from the hand of his brother, *for I fear him leſt he ſhould come and ſmite me and the mother and the children*[b].

Eſau and his family were now ſettled in mount Seir, afterwards called Edom from his name, where in proceſs of time, they became a great and formidable people; henceforwards their domeſtic broils entered deeply into their civil policy, and the indignity offered their

[a] Gen. xxvii. 44. [b] Gen. xxxii. 2.

head in the affair of the birth-right, was looked upon of, ſo groſs a nature, that the reſentments grew to be hereditary againſt the Iſraelites, and were entailed as it were, upon all the poſterity of Eſau, breaking out in perpetual ſkirmiſhes between the two kingdoms, and never ceaſing but with the deſtruction of one of them.

The very firſt opportunity that offered of affronting the Iſraelites, was in their paſſage through the wilderneſs to the land of Canaan, and this they ſeized with all eagerneſs; for though there came a meſſenger to them from Moſes, intreating in the moſt obliging terms, a paſſage through their country, with the moſt ſolemn aſſurances, that they would keep the high-way, nor turn either to the right or to the left, yet would not the king of Edom hearken to them. Upon this, the Iſraelites remonſtrated to him upon the footing of their kindred, that they were brethren, and therefore entitled to ſuch a favor, that in the diſtreſſed condition they were in, after ſo ſevere a bondage as they had ſuffered in Egypt, and ſuch a tedious march, it were inhumanity to refuſe them ſo reaſonable a requeſt, eſpecially when they engaged to uſe all poſſible expedition in their march, and to be punctual in paying for every thing they had occaſion for; but notwithſtanding their repeated inſtances, the ſettled inveteracy of the Edomite ſtill prevailed, and they not only perſiſted in denying them a paſſage, but with their king at the head of them, took the field, and determined to make good by arms, what they had refuſed by parley.

This was no very promiſing a ſetting out for two neighbouring ſtates, both alike proud of their common origin, both alike tenacious of their reſpective privileges; the firſt indignity put upon Eſau, was now revenged upon the poſterity of Jacob, by an affront the moſt public, and the moſt unprecedented amongſt neutral powers; and no wonder therefore, if from this time, we hear of continual inroads and invaſions from both quarters, if with all the ſpleen and rancour of the Edomite on the one hand, and with all the Iſraelites jealouſy, and conſciouſneſs of being the firſt aggreſſor on the other, a breach ſo early made and ſo widely opened, ſhould become at length, beyond all hopes of being cloſed again.

In the reign of king David, the Iſraelites in their turn, found means to return the treatment they had met with from the Edomites, and defeated their whole army in a general action in *the valley of Salt*, in which the Edomites loſt eighteen thouſand men [c]:

[c] 1 Chron. xviii. 12.

from this time to the reign of Jehoram, they became a province to the kings of Iſrael, who governed them by a vice-roy, but not without ſome ſtruggles to recover their liberty, but now finding a fair opportunity of ſhaking off the yoke, they reſolved upon one general effort, and their whole nation roſe, and having firſt expelled their vice-roy, they made themſelves a king, and from this time were never more in ſubjection to the houſe of David. So true was that prediction of their father's; *It ſhall come to paſs that when thou ſhalt have the dominion, that thou ſhalt break thy brother's yoke from off thy neck* [d].

The next news we hear of them is, that in the reign of king Ahaz, they fell once more upon the kingdom of Judah, and *carried away captives*, for being borderers upon Judah to the ſouth, they haraſſed that part of the kingdom that laid next to them, and with the Philiſtines on the weſt, were making frequent deſcents upon it. But what is moſt to our preſent point, and brings their ſtory home to the period of time, that we conceive them to be introduced in, in the work before us, is, that in Nebuchadnezzar's expedition againſt Jeruſalem, they among the reſt of the conquered provinces of Babylon appear the moſt forward, and the moſt inhumane too of all enemies of the Jews.

And here indeed they improved the opportunity they had, of ſatiating all their ſpleen againſt the poſterity of Iſrael, the few that had eſcaped the ſword of the Babylonians, were moſt unmercifully butchered by the Edomites; not like open enemies, but like ruffians and aſſaſſins, they murdered them in the high-ways, and to complete the cruel ſcene, and fill up the meaſure of their revenge, even when the Babylonians were withdrawn, ſatisfied with ſlaughter and loaded with the plunder of the richeſt city, and the nobleſt temple in the world, the Edomites concluded what they only had begun, and made an utter end of both the city and it's temple, and the cry was univerſal, *Down with it, down with it, even to the ground* [e]!

On this account, they are all along mentioned by the prophets, as the grand enemies of God's people; Iſaiah reckons them among the adverſaries, the worſt and ſpitefulleſt adverſaries of Judah, *Edom and Moab and the children of Ammon* [f]; Jeremiah expreſſly terms them *the evil neighbours of Judah* [g]; Ezekiel propheſieth againſt

[d] Gen. xxvii. 40. [e] Pſ. cxxxvii. 7. [f] Iſai. xi. 13. [g] Jer. xii. 14.

them,

them, becauſe *they had dealt againſt the houſe of Judah by taking vengeance, and had greatly offended and revenged himſelf upon them* [h]; Joel threatens Edom with being one day a deſolate wilderneſs, *for her violence againſt the children of Judah, and for ſhedding innocent blood* [i]; Amos does the ſame, *becauſe he did purſue his brother with the ſword, and did caſt off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and kept his wrath for ever* [k].

But Obadiah of all the prophets, is moſt bitter and moſt particular in his charge upon them, and from his deſcription we ſhall be the moſt likely to gather the real hiſtory and character of the three friends in Job. *In the day that thou ſtoodeſt on the other ſide, in the day that the ſtrangers carried away captive thy brother Jacob's forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and caſt lots upon Jeruſalem, even thou waſt one of them; but thou ſhouldeſt not have looked on the day of thy brother, in the day that he became a ſtranger, neither ſhouldeſt thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their deſtruction, neither ſhouldeſt thou have ſpoken proudly in the day of her diſtreſs; thou ſhouldeſt not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity, yea thou ſhouldeſt not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity; neither ſhouldeſt thou have ſtood in the croſs-way to cut off thoſe that did eſcape, neither ſhouldeſt thou have delivered up thoſe of his that did remain in the day of his diſtreſs* [l]. This was heaping cruelty upon treachery, ungenerous even in a profeſſed enemy, but inhuman and unnatural in a brother.

How finely is this treachery of theirs drawn in the book of Job, where the coldneſs of ſuch a friendſhip is beautifully compared to ice and ſnow, firm and compact enough to all appearance, but upon the firſt approach of heat, ready to be diſſolved? *To him that is in affliction, pity ſhould be ſhewed from his friend, but he forſaketh the fear of the Almighty; my brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, and as the ſtream of brooks, they paſs by, which are blackiſh by reaſon of the ice, and wherein the ſnow is hid; what time they wax warm, they vaniſh, when it is hot they are conſumed out of their place, the paths of their way are turned aſide, they go to nothing and periſh;—for now ye are nothing, ye ſee my caſting down and are afraid;—yea ye overwhelm the fatherleſs, and you dig a pit for your friend* [m].

This idea of the three friends and comforters of Job, reſolves the whole difficulty that all the enquirers have conceived, of their being repre-

[h] Ezek. xxv. 12. [i] Joel iii. 19. [k] Amos i. 11. [l] Obad. 11.
[m] Ch. vi. 13.

repreſented in the prologue, as ſo many real friends, whereas throughout the whole dramatic part, they turn out the ſharpeſt and bittereſt enemies, and come not to ſoften or to ſhare his miſeries, but induſtriouſly to inflame and aggravate them; ſo far as blood and kindred infer any claim of friendſhip, ſo far they were his friends, but alas! thoſe connections are much too tender to ſtand the rude ſhock of jealouſies and claſhing intereſts; his brethren they might be, and were, ſtill never the leſs enemies for that relation, perhaps on that very account, the more keen and inveterate againſt him; no foes ſo bitter or ſo relentleſs, as *thoſe of our own houſehold.*

Should there then any thing of this kind tranſpire, in the heat of the debate between Job and his three friends, ſhould there perhaps ſome oblique reflection or ſecret inſinuation be thrown out, which fairly glances at theſe domeſtic differences, that had ſubſiſted all along between theſe two families, and ſpread themſelves afterwards through their two kingdoms; the preſumption would be, that the Edomites were the very people concealed under theſe fictitious perſons; if the matter of the birth-right ſhould once be touched upon, there can then remain I apprehend, no doubt but they are the very perſons.

How that matter ſtands then, will be worth while to conſider; the hiſtory of the Iſraelites has been already traced from almoſt their firſt origin, out of the xxixth chapter of this book, where Job gives a deſcription of himſelf in all his proſperity, and I believe we need go no lower than the xxxth, to pick up ſome pretty curious matter relating to the hiſtory of the Edomites, where he gives an account of his adverſity.

This chapter opens with Job's bemoaning the ſad reverſe of all his former ſplendor, and placing at the head of his worſt calamities, that *they that were younger than he, have him in deriſion, whoſe fathers he would have diſdained to have ſet with the dogs of his flock*; from this ſingle circumſtance little more is to be collected, than ſome ſettled animoſity, that had very early taken place between the two families, but nothing is to be concluded about the priority of Job's age, unleſs we take his word for it, till we become better acquainted with the pretenſions in this reſpect, of the three friends.

But a little before, Eliphaz had diſputed this very point with him, and put in his claim to an age prior to that of Job's; it is where he calls Job to taſk, upon the pretenſions he had aſſumed to ſome ſuperior attainments, and arrogated particularly to himſelf this one

point

point of precedence, that he was older than they; *Art thou the firſt man that was born, or waſt thou made before the hills?—With us are both the grey-headed and very aged men, much older than thy father*[n]? A flatter contradiction there could not well be, than in the two facts averred by the two contending parties, one aſſerts that *they are younger than he*, the other inſinuates in the firſt place, that the claim its-ſelf is ridiculous, and in the next, that the fact alledged is falſe, for that *with them were men much older than his father*.

Now upon what principles can ſo bold a paradox be ſolved, but by admitting what I ſuppoſe is true, each of their pretenſions? by priority of birth, Jacob moſt certainly of the two, was not the firſt-born, but Eſau was; ſtill Jacob had the birth-right; it was Eſau's fortune indeed, as his hiſtory informs us, *to come out firſt* [o], but it was his misfortune, or his fault rather, that he had deſpiſed the birth-right, and ſold it for a trifle to his younger brother, who knew how to ſet a proper value upon it.

Take this matter a little lower. The Iſraelites conſidered as a nation, looked upon themſelves to be the oldeſt and the moſt reſpectable nation of all the eaſt, but this again, was a point that the Edomites diſputed, and juſtly too with them; earlier than Moſes they could not form any pretenſions at all, but certain it is that the Edomites had a government and policy of their own, when the Iſraelites went out of Egypt, and in that expedition of theirs through the wilderneſs, they found to their coſt, that there was a king in Edom ſtrong enough to diſpute their paſſage with them, and make them alter their intended rout. In ſhort before there reigned one ſingle king in Iſrael, there had reigned no leſs than eight ſucceſſive kings in Edom, the regal government of the Edomites, to ſay nothing of the ducal one, being almoſt four hundred years older than that of the Iſraelites [p].

Here then we are let into a ſecret, which promiſes fairly to unravel this whole myſtery, and to reconcile a contradiction not to be reconciled on any other principles; in fact, no doubt but Eſau's pretenſions to ſuperior age were ſtrictly juſtifiable, but in the diſpoſition of providence with regard to the birth-right, he had forfeited it, and Ja-

[n] Ch. xv. 7. [o] Gen. xxv. 25.
[p] Shuckford's Connec. Vol. II. p. 194. Cumberland's Orig. Gent. Tract. 1.

cob

cob was in poſſeſſion of it; with regard to the antiquity of their government, there was no compariſon between their pretenſions.

But this is not all; annext to theſe pretenſions to ſuperior age and dignity, Job all along inſinuates a ſuperior claim to ſome ſupernatural communications, as if he were the favorite of heaven, and they the off-ſcourings of the earth; and upon this head it is, that Eliphaz goes on to expoſtulate with him, *ſhould a wiſe man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the eaſt wind, ſhould he reaſon with unprofitable talk, or with ſpeech wherewith he can do no good, yea thou caſteſt off fear, and reſtraineſt prayer before God, for thy mouth uttereth iniquity, and thou chooſeſt the tongue of the crafty, yea thine own mouth condemneth thee; haſt thou heard the ſecret of God? and doeſt thou reſtrain wiſdom to thy ſelf? what knoweſt thou that we know not, what underſtandeſt thou, that is not in us? are the conſolations of God ſmall with thee, is there any ſecret thing with thee*[q]?

Connected as theſe words are with the former, I cannot help ſuſpecting, what has been already inſinuated, that the wiſdom here and elſewhere ſo much inſiſted upon in Job's pretenſions, is the true religion, of which the Jews were the ſole repoſitory, and which gave them the privilege, they ſo greatly plumed themſelves upon, of being thought the favorites of heaven, and that the *ſecret* here alluded to, is none other than *the everlaſting covenant*, a ſecret, which the poſterity of Eſau were ſo far from having any ſhare in, that it is more than probable they were downright idolaters, and out of even the twelve tribes of Iſrael, Judah alone was honored with it; and though Reuben was the firſt-born of Iſrael, yet it is very remarkable, that in the genealogy of his family, Judah is firſt reckoned, and the reaſon of his pre-eminence is aſſigned in expreſs terms, becauſe *of him came the ruler*[r].

In whatever light therefore we view this paradox, whether we conſider the ſeniority aſſerted by both parties, as matter of diſpute between the poſterity of Eſau and of Jacob, or between Judah only and Eſau, there is truth enough to juſtify the aſſertion on both ſides, for Judah was no more the firſt-born of Jacob, than Jacob was the firſt-born of Iſaac, and yet both of them by default, were in poſſeſſion of the birth-right, and both of conſequence, were treated in point of rank and genealogy, upon the footing of elder brothers.

[q] Ch. xv. 8. [r] 1 Chron. v. 2.

The inferiority of the three friends to him, in the matter of rank and antiquity, thus aſſerted, the next exception that Job takes to them, is the meanneſs and obſcurity of their firſt origin; *Their fathers I would have diſdained to have ſet with the dogs of my flock; yea whereto might the ſtrength of their hands profit me: in whom old age was periſhed? for want and famine they were ſolitary, fleeing into the wilderneſs in former times deſolate and waſte: who cut up mallows by the buſhes and juniper-trees for their meat; they were driven forth among men, they cried after them as after a thief, to dwell in the clefts of the valleys, in caves of the earth, and in the rocks; among the buſhes they brayed, under the nettles they were gathered together; they were children of fools, yea children of baſe Men, viler than the Earth.*

If any circumſtance in the ſtory of theſe three perſons, could have tempted one to embrace the opinion of their being of Pythagoras's ſchool, one would think it ſhould have been the ſingular ſeverity of the diſcipline here deſcribed, the great hardſhips they ſubmitted to, and the extreme abſtemiouſneſs they practiſed; Pythagoras himſelf is ſaid to have lived upon roots only and herbs, and ſuch lengths did ſome frantic diſciples of his go, in this kind of regimen, that we read of one ſet of them, of nearly the ſame complexion with theſe in Job, for they lived in the clefts of the rocks, feeding only upon weeds and ſuch like traſh[f].

But what they practiſed from choice and whim only, it will be found that the Edomite ſubmitted to from neceſſity, and therefore what would have been fair enough to have reproached the former with, was ungenerous to object to the latter, the ſordidneſs of their manner of life, or the meanneſs of their origin; that the charge indeed againſt them in either of theſe reſpects, ſhould be aggravated in a work like this, is no more than what might be expected: in the heat and ſpirit of ſo angry a debate, there was no diſagreeable circumſtance in the whole life and ſtory of either party, that they might not promiſe themſelves to be brought upon the ſtage, on this occaſion; and if their blood and family were a point they valued themſelves upon, there moſt likely would be laid the ſtreſs by their adverſary; it was too inviting a topick not to be enlarged upon, a reproach, which there is ſomething in human nature, that can brook the leaſt of all reproaches.

[f] Των Πυθαγορικων δε τυχον αἱβλιοι τινες
Εν τη χαραδρα τρωγοντες ἁλιμα, ϗ κακα
Τοιαυτα συλλεγοντες. Athen. Deipn. p. 161.

And yet perhaps, were we to go back to the firſt origin of moſt nations in the world, ſome account like this is to be given of them; the circumſtances in particular, of every freſh colony are pretty much the ſame, for without manual labor it is impoſſible to ſubſiſt at all, and the fruits of the earth muſt of courſe be the ſupport of it for ſome time; the lazy and the indigent make no ſmall part of every ſuch community, and what they have not procured by induſtry, they will ſupply by rapine and plunder; but in proportion as induſtry gets ground, and commerce with other nations takes place, riches will flow in upon them, and they will form into an orderly and civilized body, and from a rude, ignorant and baſe original, will grow into an ingenious, brave and liberal people.

The accounts we have of the primitive Greeks, is, that they were the deſcendants of ſavages, ignorant of agriculture, and browzing like cattle, on herbage, witneſs the divine honors inſtituted to Pelaſgus, who firſt taught them to feed on acorns; look back into the firſt riſe of ſome of our european nations, there again you will find a rude uncivilized race of men, without letters, without arts and ſciences, and without religion; ſome centuries hence, our own american plantations may probably think it hard to be reproached with the vileneſs of their origin, when they have once grown into a flouriſhing people, and have forgotten, of what a deſperate profligate generation of men they firſt conſiſted.

From general deſcriptions therefore, there is not much to be collected of the nature, cuſtoms or condition of any particular people; for if there be not ſomething very peculiar and proper to the climate or ſoil of the country, or to the genius and manners of the inhabitants, there is no pronouncing with any certainty upon it; but this there is in the caſe before us, there are traces of both theſe ſorts ſtrong and ſtriking, both the genius of the people, and the face of the country ſo very maſterly deſcribed, that it will demand as little ſagacity as geography, to diſcover that they could be no other but the land and children of Edom.

Here as a late ingenious traveller obſerves, " we are to be preſented with a variety of quite different proſpects, from thoſe we have met with in the land of Canaan, for here we are not to be entertained with paſtures cloathed with flocks, or with vallies ſtanding thick with corn; here are no vineyards or oliveyards, but the whole is a loneſom and deſolate wilderneſs, no otherwiſe diverſified than by plains that are covered with ſand, and mountains that are made up

of

of naked rocks and precipices; neither is this country ever, unleſs ſometimes at the Equinoxes, refreſhed with rain; but the few hardy vegetables which it produces, are ſtunted by a perpetual drought, and the nouriſhment contributed to them by the dews in the night, ſufficiently impaired by the powerful heat of the ſun in the day; there is no variety of plants in thoſe parts, thoſe they have, are indebted to the cleft of ſome barren rock, or to the ſandy plains for their ſupport, for ſoil properly ſo called they have none, fountains and wells are ſo rare in thoſe parts, that we may well account for their being called in ſcripture, *the waters of contention*; animals there are but a few ſpecieſes of, becauſe there is nothing to ſupport them[w]."

The contraſt here is ſo finely drawn between the two countries, that there was no avoiding the tranſcribing it, it puts the matter of diſpute in ſo true a light, and points Job's raillery ſo directly at the three friends, upon the ſubject of their country, the *deſolate waſte ſolitude*, the *mallows* and the *buſhes*, the *juniper roots* and the *nettles*, the *clefts of the valleys*, and the *caves of the rocks*, and all theſe put in competition with the *glory of all lands*, *the land flowing with milk and honey*, that it were blindneſs not to ſee it, or obſtinacy next to perverſeneſs, not to acknowledge the reſemblance.

And in this repreſentation of the country of Edom, writers antient and modern, are all agreed, the tract of land which the poſterity of Eſau inhabited, is always ſpoken of as being craggy and mountainous, and great part of it deſart[x]; when Eſau firſt ſettled in mount Seir, it does not appear what family he took along with him, but it was probably no very great one, for his father was then living, and his herds and flocks undivided among his children; after his death, all the account we have of the matter, is, *that Eſau took his wives and his ſons and his daughters, and all the perſons of his houſe, and his cattle and all his beaſts, and all his ſubſtance which he had got in the land of Canaan, and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob*[y]; the country he came into, was already in part inhabited by the Horites, and probably that portion of it which he ſeized upon, not the moſt fertile for that reaſon.

[w] Shaw's Travels. p. 377.

[x] Et revera, ut dicamus aliquid de naturâ loci, omnis auſtralis regio Idumæorum de Eleutheropoli ad Petram et Ailam, hæc enim eſt poſſeſſio Eſau, in ſpecubus habitatiunculas habet, et propter nimios calores ſolis, quia meridiana provincia eſt, ſubterraneis tuguriis utitur. Hieron. in Obad. l. 4.

[y] Gen. xxxvi. 6.

Exactly conſiſtent with this idea of Edom's country, is the deſcription given of it, in ſacred ſcripture; Jeremiah in that dreadfull judgment which he pronounces upon Edom, in her laſt day, addreſſes her, *O thou that dwelleſt in the clefts of the rock, that holdeſt the heighths of the hills: though thou ſhouldeſt make thy neſt as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down thence, ſaith the Lord*[z]. Obadiah in his viſion concerning the land of Edom, tells her, *the pride of thine heart hath deceived thee: thou that dwelleſt in the clefts of the rock, whoſe habitation is high, that ſaith in his heart, who ſhall bring me down to the ground? though thou exalt thy ſelf as the eagle, and though thou ſetteſt thy ſelf among the ſtars, yet thence will I bring thee down, ſaith the Lord*[a]. Both we ſee, compare his dwelling to the eagle's neſt, which is generally found at the tops of the rocks, and in the clefts or ſummits of precipices; ſo exactly does the deſcription in Job, tally with the accounts ſacred and profane, of this country.

And much akin to the face of the country, were the manners of the people, rude and barbarous as their native rocks; ſomething there is in the character of Eſau himſelf, that juſtifies the appellation the apoſtle gives him of *profane* Eſau[b], ſomething manifeſtly ſavage and inhuman, relentleſs and unforgiving, inſomuch that one is at a loſs to account for that openneſs and generoſity, with which he received his brother Jacob, at the firſt interview he had with him, after their ſeparation, and upon which ſingle circumſtance a late author, ridiculouſly enough, has erected him into a genteel accompliſhed character[c]; but ſtill we ſee ſpleen and malice brooding all along at the heart of him, and a wild deſultory kind of life, in conſequence of his father's ſentence, his portion. *Behold thy dwelling ſhall be* of the *fatneſs of the earth, and of the due of heaven from above, and by thy ſword ſhalt thou live, and ſhalt ſerve thy brother*[d]. Whether the tranſlation as it ſtands, be right, or whether as a learned prelate has lately conjectured, the prepoſition MIN, rendered *of the*, ſhould be looked upon as excluſive, and ſo the paſſage tranſlated, *Behold thy dwelling ſhall be* far from *the fatneſs of the earth*[e], is left with the learned reader.

[z] Jer. xlix. 16. [a] Obad. 3. [b] Hebr. xii. 16. [c] Chubb's Diſſert. on Eſau and Jacob. paſſim. [d] Gen. xxvii. 39. [e] Biſhop of Clogher's Chronol. p. 142. Joſephus's comment upon the bleſſing of Eſau is, τα μεν περι κυνηγεσιον καὶ δυναμιν σωματος· ἐν ὁπλοις καὶ πασιν ἐργοις ἐυδοκιμησειν αὐτον ἐφασκε, καὶ καρπωσεσθαι την ἐπ αὐλοις δοξαν δι' αἰωνος.

But

But whatever his character was, if we may form any judgment of the genius and temper of his deſcendants, the Edomites, from that churliſh anſwer they returned to Moſes's meſſage, for leave to paſs their territory, it will not be much to their advantage, and they muſt have been a rude and an ill-natured people; we have indeed but few records, that give any light into this matter, but what we have confirm this ſuppoſition. Joſephus's character of the Edomites in his time, is full as little in their favor, as their own anſwer; he ſpeaks of them as a bold and daring people, fond of broils and tumults, which they as much delighted in, as others in the ſoftening pleaſures of luxury; and elſewhere, he repreſents them as a people, fond of quarrels and changes, brutal and churliſh, ſuch as ſtood not in need of having any art uſed with them, to engage them to fight, becauſe they were a people that go to fight, as others go to a banquet[f]. So that allowing for ſome little poetic aggravations in the character of the three friends, the ſacred author here again, wanted not nature or hiſtory for the original of the picture, he has drawn of them.

Still it is not to be diſſembled, that to the ſtudy of wiſdom or philoſophy, the Edomite had very juſt pretenſions, and ſome of the liberal arts and ſciences ſeem to have erected their ſtandard very early amongſt them; the knowledge and uſe of the conſtellations, one of the moſt important diſcoveries in aſtronomy, and of which we have a very particular detail in the IX[th] chapter of this book, are proofs of the great advances they had made in this particular branch of knowledge, and to do them juſtice, this was not the only one; but the misfortune was, that theſe were the attainments they ſet too high a value upon, and on the credit of which, they looked upon the reſt of the world as ignorant and barbarous. On this occaſion Jeremiah takes occaſion to rally them[g], when propheſying their deſtruction, he reminds them of the unprofitableneſs of all that ſcience

[f] Θορυβωδες καὶ ἀταχτον ἐθνος, ἀεί τι μείζονος πρὸς τα κινημαλα, καὶ ταις μεταβολαις χαιρον, πρὸς ὀλιγην τε κολακειαν των διομενων τα ὁπλα κινῃ, καὶ καθαπερ εις ἑορτην εις τας παραταξεις ἐπειγομενον. Joſeph. de bell. Jud. L. iv. c. iv. [g] Jer. xlix. 7. The eaſtern part of the world was famous for the ſtudy of wiſdom or philoſophy, as it was called in latter days; the Edomites put in their claim to this prerogative as appears from this text, and alſo from the *book of Job*, where Eliphaz one of the diſputants is called the *Temanite*, as being deſcended from Teman Eſau's grandſon, who gave name to that country. Patrick. in loc. Perplacet mihi vetuſtiſſima Chriſtianorum, et inter eos Juſt. Mart. & Tertull. ſententia ab Arabiâ veniſſe hos ſapientes. Grot. in Matt. ii. 1. Omnes Arabes jam olim ſapientiâ celebres, præſertim illi ab *Eſavo* orti, ut ex hiſtoria *Jobi* patet, & inter hos ominebant hâc laude Temanæi. Idem. in loc.

for

for which they were ſo celebrated; *Is wiſdom no more in Teman? is council periſhed from the prudent? is their wiſdom vaniſhed?* Obadiah reproaches them in the ſame language; *ſhall I not in that day, ſaith the Lord, even deſtroy the wiſe men out of Edom, and underſtanding out of the mount of Eſau*[g]? The truth is, it was upon the ſpeculative part of knowledge, they laid all the ſtreſs, the ſecrets and the beauties of nature were the grand objects of their enquiries, which no doubt were both uſeful and laudable, and had they not ſtopt there, but carried on their reſearches to the ſupreme cauſe, they had made a proper and a religious uſe of them.

There is a vein of raillery therefore, which runs through the whole *drama*, upon the ſingle pretenſions the three friends had aſſerted to wiſdom; each ſide in its turn, claims to its-ſelf the ſuperiority in this reſpect, and endeavours to mortify the other upon this very ſcore. *No doubt*, ſays Job, *but ye are the people and wiſdom ſhall die with you; but I have underſtanding as well as you, I am not inferior to you*[h]. This conſidered as levelled at the Edomite, carries with it a refined piece of ſatyr, proud and conceited as he was of his philoſophy, and cheap as he held all others, for their ignorance, ſtill to all to the moral ends and purpoſes of true knowledge, an abſolute ſtranger himſelf.

This defect in their reſearches it is, that Job ſo beautifully diſplays in the XXVIII[th] chapter, where, allowing all the merit that natural philoſophy can claim, he ſtill inſiſts upon its imperfection and inſufficiency, ſo long as the grand queſtion lies unreſolved, *Where ſhall wiſdom be found, and where is the place of underſtanding? man knoweth not the price of it, neither is it found in the land of the living: the depth ſaith it is not in me, and the ſea ſaith it is not with me: it cannot be gotten for gold, neither ſhall ſilver be weighed for the price thereof: it cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx nor the ſapphire; the gold and the chryſtal cannot equal it, and the exchange of it ſhall not be for jewels of fine gold: no mention ſhall be made of coral, or of pearl, for the price of wiſdom is above rubies: the topaz of Ethiopia ſhall not equal it, neither ſhall it be valued with pure gold*[i].

Addreſs this argument to the Edomite, and it is pointed and full to the purpoſe; for at the ſame time they were in ſuch high reputation for wiſdom, they were equally eſteemed for their riches and

[g] Obad. 3. [h] Ch. xii. 1. [i] Ch. xxviii. ℣ 12.

their traffick; the gold of Ophir in particular was a commodity in which they abounded, the two only ſea-ports, from which this valuable branch of commerce was carried on, were Elath and Eſion-geber, both ſituate on the red-ſea, and both belonging to their kingdom; all the trade of Africk, Arabia, Perſia and India, which was carried on through the red-ſea, was confined to theſe two ports, and here it was they unloaded all their rich cargoes; theſe countries abounded we know, with vaſt variety of valuable wares, ſilver and gold, ivory and precious ſtones; nothing is more famous than the gold of Arabia, nor can there be a better account of the merchandize of this part of the world, than what Moſes has given of it. *And the gold*, ſays he, *of that land is good, there is the pearl*, for ſo Bochart renders *bdellium, and the onyx ſtone*[k].

The Jews knew well the importance of theſe two ports, and the immenſe riches which flowed in upon Edom from them, they had been in poſſeſſion of them themſelves, from the reign of king David to that of Jehoram, and the quantity of gold drawn from thence by David and Solomon only, is almoſt incredible[l]; and had the Edomites made as pious an uſe of it as they did, and not made thoſe vaſt riches miniſterial to their pride and luxury, which thoſe good men conſecrated to the uſe of the temple, the fine ſtrokes of wit and raillery upon this occaſion had been loſt, which owe all their beauty to this one conſideration, that with all thoſe infinite reſources of wealth and grandeur, that with all thoſe prodigious pretenſions to wiſdom and philoſophy, which it could not be denied but the Edomites were in poſſeſſion of, yet with regard to true religion, that perfection of all wiſdom, and the only true riches, they were abſolutely ignorant; and whilſt the poſterity of Jacob their brethren, had been honored by God with being the repoſitories of the everlaſting covenant, eſtabliſhed with their father, they not only had forgotten the religion their father Eſau had been all along educated in, but were fallen into the groſſeſt idolatry[m].

Upon the topick therefore of wiſdom and grandeur, Elihu takes them to taſk, and reproves them for the vain diſplay they had been making of it, in their attack upon Job; *great men* ſays he, *are not always wiſe, neither do the aged underſtand judgment*[n]. He allows all the pretenſions they had been making, to ſuperior attainments in both

[k] Bochart Hieroz. Voll. II. L. V. c. 25. [l] Prideaux's Conn. Vol. 1. B. 1. [m] Sherlock Diſc. p. 237. [n] Ch. xxxii. 9.

theſe

theſe reſpects, but denies the inference they would draw, that therefore they were better than Job: in his turn, he reproves Job too, for laying the ſtreſs he had done upon theſe two qualifications, a foible in which the Jew ſhared in common with the Edomite, and calls upon him to account, if he could, for ſome of the moſt common and obvious appearances in nature [n]. In the winding up of the *drama*, God himſelf reſumes the expoſtulations upon this ſubject, and reduces Job at laſt to an humble confeſſion of his ignorance, and a devout acknowledgment of the infinite wiſdom and goodneſs of his maker.

Here then let us pauſe a while, and review this matter with ſome attention; Job in the aſhes we ſay, is Judah in his captivity; and the three comforters are the children of Edom his brethren; and could fancy now have formed, or hiſtory have furniſhed, a people ſo calculated to teize and provoke the impatient Jew, in this his affliction, as the envious, ſpiteful, inſolent and ſelf-conceited Edomite? this accounts for all their uncharitableneſs and inhumanity, and all the ſly inſinuations and bitter invectives, they throw out againſt him; to mock and inſult him was undoubtedly the errand they came upon, and yet there are circumſtances, which leave no room to doubt that they were not friends of his only, but brethren.

The ſon of Sirach has obſerved, *there is a friend who being turned to enmity will diſcover thy reproach, and if thou be brought low he will be againſt thee* [o]; of this complexion were Job's three friends, too intimate with him, not to know all his foibles, and too inveterate againſt him, not to expoſe them. It is a jeſt therefore to talk as ſome authors do, of friendſhip like this, having its foundation in a ſimilitude of manners, for there is no reaſon to believe that any ſuch friendſhip ever ſubſiſted between Job and his three friends; it was a friendſhip, if we may call it ſo, that had a foundation of a very different nature, a foundation in blood and family only, where indeed we may ſuppoſe the warmeſt affections, but where little piques and jealouſies are ever inſinuating themſelves, and tearing aſunder thoſe connections, which nature fixt as the grand cement of all domeſtic happineſs.

And what could contribute to inhance the diſtreſs of the captive Jew, half ſo much as this one circumſtance, to ſee in the midſt of all his calamities his own kindred deriding and inſulting him? The

[n] Ch. xxxviii. and s. d. [o] Ecclus. vi. 9.

inſpired penman has preſented in the xliſt pſalm, a picture of much the ſame kind and in much the ſame colors. " Mine enemies ſpeak evil " of me, when ſhall he die and his name periſh? and if he come " to ſee me (the very viſit here deſcribed) his heart conceiveth " falſhood, and when he cometh forth he telleth it: all mine ene- " mies whiſper together againſt me, even againſt me do they imagin " this evil. Let the ſentence of guiltineſs, ſay they, proceed againſt " him, and now that he lieth let him riſe up no more: Yea even " mine own familiar friend whom I truſted, who did alſo eat of " my bread hath laid great wait for me."

There is ſuch a glaring likeneſs between the diſtreſs here painted and that which runs through the whole performance under examination, that one would be tempted to ſuſpect that they both belonged to the ſame perſon; and if to the ſuſpicions already ſuggeſted of the later date of this pſalm, than has been hitherto aſſigned it, we add this collateral evidence, the reader, I imagin, will by this time be led to the ſame concluſion.

To what hath been already obſerved upon this head, give me leave however to throw in an obſervation or two, which ſeem to give farther weight and credit to their ſuſpicions. The L^th^ pſalm bears for its title, *a pſalm of Aſaph*, and yet the beſt interpreters bring the ſubject and occaſion of it down as late as Jehoſhaphat's or Hezekiah's reign, both theſe, ſays the excellent Prelate in his *argument*, the holy man awakens by this pſalm, to a conſideration of the danger they were in, repreſenting God as the ſupreme judge of the world coming in an amazing manner, to call them all to a ſtrict account. " Out of Sion hath God appeared in perfect beauty, our God ſhall come, and ſhall not keep ſilence, there ſhall go before him a conſuming fire and a mighty tempeſt ſhall be ſtirred up round about him," *&c.* The pſalmiſt here repreſents the divine majeſty, like to a king coming out of his palace, attended by his miniſters with the enſigns of terror carried before him, and iſſuing out his royal orders to ſummon all his ſubjects to appear at his tribunal [P].

Carry down this pſalm a little lower than he here places it, and you ſee it in all its beauty, inſtead of Hezekiah's reign, lay the ſcene only in the reign of Zedekiah, and there you ſee the Almighty proceeding to judgment with that incorrigible people the Jews, and declaring to them that their guilt was now become beyond the

[P] Patr. Paraph. on L^th^ pſalm.

reach of all ſacrifice. But this is not all, I cite this pſalm in proof of what has been advanced, with relation to the children of Edom being characterized under the perſons of theſe three friends; at verſe xvi, from addreſſing himſelf to the Jews in all the ſolemnity of an incenſed judge, God turns himſelf to ſome or other, who had taken occaſion to ſtep in, and inſult them upon their downfall, and reprimands them in their turn, for their inhumanity in taking ſo ungenerous an advantage. "But unto the ungodly, ſaith God, why doſt "thou preach my laws and takeſt my covenant in thy mouth? "whereas thou hateſt to be reformed, and haſt caſt my covenant "behind thee; when thou ſaweſt a thief thou conſentedſt unto him, "and haſt been partaker with the adulterers; thou haſt let thy "mouth ſpeak wickedneſs, and with thy tongue thou haſt ſet forth "deceit." Thus far indeed the character is too general, to bear a particular application, but attend only to what follows, and then ſee if the picture can poſſibly be miſtaken, for any other perſon but the Edomite. "Thou ſateſt and ſpakeſt againſt thy brother, yea and "haſt ſlandered thine own mother's ſon." A circumſtance, which applied to the perſecution of David by his ſon Abſalom, the common account of this matter, is not only void of all beauty, but has not either nature, truth or hiſtory for its foundation.

Go on now to the LV^th^ pſalm, and there again you have the very complaint repeated, and thoſe falſe brethren once more drawn out in their proper colors; "for it is not an open enemy that hath "done me this diſhonor, for then I could have born it, neither was "it mine adverſary that did magnify himſelf againſt me, for then "peradventure I would have hid myſelf from him; but it was "even thou my companion, my guide, and mine own familiar "friend;" and again ver. xxi. "He laid his hands upon ſuch as be "at peace with him and he brake his covenant: the words of his "mouth were ſofter than butter, having war in his heart, his words "were ſmoother than oil, and yet be they very ſwords."

It is not in the power of language, to furniſh a better comment upon the artful treacherous viſit, paid by the three friends than what is given in the paſſages here quoted; all the baſe ſuggeſtions, they occaſionally throw out againſt him, under the plauſible pretences of friendſhip and the privileges annexed to it, are in this view reconcileable to truth and propriety, and the pſalms themſelves in every other light at leaſt obſcure, are taught to ſpeak a very intelligible language.

It is to prepare the reader for the grand controverſy, carried on in the dramatic part of this work, that I have been thus particular in deducing the character of the Edomites, and tracing their hiſtory, that part eſpecially of it which relates to this grand event, the Babyloniſh captivity, through ſeveral paſſages, which have hitherto eſcaped the obſervations of both critics and commentators; it was but neceſſary to do this, in order to form a proper judgment of the part they act upon this occaſion, and when we ſee the ſame characters, drawn with the ſame ſublimity both of ſtile and ſentiment, by other ſacred writers, we ſhall be the leſs ſurprized to find ſome likeneſſes greatly aggravated, and others proportionably ſunk, juſt as the nature of the work required, ſome in all the glare of light and colorings, and others again caſt in ſhade.

'Tis ſufficient that upon the whole the picture reſemble the original, and if we add to this, that our idea of the three friends of Job, enhances the beauty, at the ſame time that we ſuppoſe it the groundwork of the poem, that at the ſame time that the Edomites were in fact the perſecutors of the Jews, there were other circumſtances in their ſtory which render them of all others, the moſt proper to be introduced into a *drama*, where the buſineſs of it was to mortify them, and to reduce them to a more humble ſenſe of themſelves, the reader will then come to the peruſal of the *drama* its-ſelf, provided with all the materials neceſſary to enter upon the thorough diſcuſſion of it, and at length be prepared to ſee it in its full extent and beauty.

For certain it is, if any thing could contribute to aggravate the diſtreſs of the captive Jew, upon this occaſion, it muſt be to find himſelf at the mercy of a ſet of people, whom he deſpiſed, and to be told of his ſins from ſuch an hand, was more than doubling the weight of them; even the compaſſion of ſuch wretched comforters, muſt be irkſome to him, and that ſituation of all others, the moſt embarraſſing, where, as the pſalmiſt deſcribes it, *Even thoſe that lead him away captive came to pity him.*

In fact, it is the moſt barbarous part of inhumanity to add to an afflicted perſon's miſery, or endeavour to increaſe a paſſion, whoſe ſingle nature is already above his patience; the downright blows of the devil are nothing compared to the oblique ſtrokes and expoſtulations of a friend, and where theſe aſſume the ſoft addreſs, and inſinuate themſelves under the plauſible veil of pity and compaſſion, it muſt be an heart more ſtout, than falls to the ſhare of moſt men,

in ſuch a ſituation, that fails not, and he muſt have a command too of temper more than ordinary, who gives not that heart its full vent, and breaks not out into expreſſions of reſentment adequate to the provocation, though perhaps not therefore juſtifiable by the maxims either of prudence or of piety.

To ſpeak the truth, the poet, whoever he was, has ſhewn one of the greateſt ſtrokes of invention in the whole poem, in the introducing of this one character: there could not have been deviſed a more embarraſſing circumſtance, than the putting ſuch ſentiments of wiſdom and piety, into the mouths of three perſons, from whom the Jew ſo little expected them, or was ſo unlikely to receive them with any regard, nor could there have been employed three perſons ſo likely to gall him, as thoſe who ſtood related to him by the neareſt ties of blood, that had been witneſs to all his former glory, and thought themſelves not a little injured, in having been defrauded of that glory themſelves, at a time when by birthright and every other claim of nature, they conceived themſelves entitled to it.

This idea of them of courſe gives great acrimony to their argument, and inhances proportionably Job's diſtreſs; and at the ſame time that it points all the ſatire and raillery of the diſpute with Job, it reflects the greateſt honor upon the three friends; for their putting his reſtoration upon the footing of his virtue, was the higheſt compliment they could pay to themſelves, who after being a province for many years to the Jews, had ſhook off the yoke, and recovered their former liberties.

It is this very ſituation then, which the poet works up ſo highly, upon the approach of Job's three friends, and nothing but this account of them, can reconcile that burſt of paſſion, which he falls into upon their viſit, which at firſt ſight, has all the expreſſions of civility and reſpect, and would ſeem rather deſigned to oblige than to offend: but ſo it is, at the very firſt appearance of them, he takes the alarm, and for ſeven days, falls into a ſplenetic ſullen ſilence; after this, he flies out into ſuch a blaſphemous ſtrain of expoſtulations with his maker, as fully juſtifies all that the devil had inſinuated of him, and what neither the ruin of his fortunes, the deſtruction of his children, nor the councils of his wife could draw from him, this one viſit brings about; and ſhews at leaſt, that he had more knowledge of their perſons, and more acquaintance with the errand they were come upon, than all the commentators put together.

I will but juſt crave leave to add, that in the *Lamentations* we have much the ſame account of them; *they haunt our ſteps that we cannot go in our ſtreets; our end is near, our days are fulfilled, for our end is come: our perſecutors are ſwifter than the eagles of heaven, they purſued us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderneſs* [q]; who theſe perſecutors were, it is of conſequence in the preſent enquiry, to know more particularly; the Chaldeans they were not, for they took Jeruſalem by open force, it was the Edomite, that *eagle of the rocks*, that laid in ambuſcade for them in the croſs ways, and cuts off the retreat of thoſe, that had eſcaped the Chaldeans; and therefore we find them in the next verſe ironically ſtruck at, and the whole myſtery unfolded, *rejoice and be glad oh daughter of Edom, that dwelleſt in the land of Uz, for the cup alſo ſhall paſs unto thee, thou in thy turn ſhalt be drunken, and ſhalt make thy ſelf naked.*

[q] Lam. iv. 18.

SECT.

SECT. II.

WE have now I apprehend, got pretty well to the bottom of the characters of the *dramatis perſonæ*, in this performance, and having thus far accommodated both the perſons and things contained in the prologue, to known facts and real characters, and above all, having ſeen how exact a reſemblance each of them, bears to the grand event we have been contending for, the Babyloniſh captivity, we ſhould ſeem in poſſeſſion as it were, of the old poſtulatum of Archimedes, and to have gained footing enough to manage an unweildly weight, which hath hitherto ſtaggered all that have undertaken it.

For the misfortune all along has plainly been, that the ſeveral enquirers into this book, little ſolicitous about eſtabliſhing any connection between the beginning and the middle, or what is more properly, the prologue and the dramatic part of it, have ſuffered themſelves to be amuſed upon the ſeparate plan, and ſo detaching the prologue from the *drama*, becauſe they found it difficult to reconcile the impatience of Job in the one, with his patience in the other, have ſate down to collect Job's character only from the prologue, and that of the three friends from the *drama*; whereas no competent judgment can be formed of either, ſuppoſing all the pieces genuin, but from the parts they act in both.

This therefore has been the method we have been purſuing, in the courſe of our enquiry, to fiſh out the characters of each of the contending parties, not from any traditional prejudices about either the one or the other, nor yet from any ideal *hypotheſes*, but from what is the moſt obvious way of coming at the truth of the matter, the language they ſpeak, the known hiſtory they allude to, and the parts they ſuſtain; and with this advantage, the reader will come the more properly inſtructed, to enter into the true buſineſs and ſpirit of the *drama*, when he is firſt apprized of the characters of each actor, and ſees how exactly each character is ſuited to carry on a diſpute, which if ours be the true account of the matter, is none other, than what might fairly be ſuppoſed to have been handled between the Edomite and the Jew, during his captivity.

The

The Jews we ſay then, are the people couched under the perſon and character of Job, and the three friends are the repreſentatives of the people of Edom; the particular circumſtances of theſe two nations, at that grand period the Babyloniſh captivity, leave no room to doubt, but that this is the event ſo highly pictured in the prologue; this therefore fixes the preciſe time wherein the ſcene of the work is laid, and it will then require no very great ſagacity, to fix too the ſcene its-ſelf of action. Make only Babylon the place of rendezvouz, bring hither the old enemies and perſecutors of the Jews, conduct the ſpiteful Edomite to the wretched abode of the captive Jew, and let him there behold his old friend and brother, forſaken of God, and abandoned to deſpair, you have then all that is neceſſary to open the buſineſs and unravel the intrigue of the whole *drama*, each character will appear in its proper light, and the arguments ſo ſtoutly controverted between them, turn out to be the very arguments maintained all along by the Jews in their captivity; the acquittal at length of Job and the condemnation of the three friends, a circumſtance unaccountable in any other view, will be fully vindicated to hiſtoric truth, as well as to dramatic decorum.

What indeed is the argument, or ſubject matter of this poem, is a point which has been very variouſly defined, according to the particular *hypotheſes* of the ſeveral enquirers; a great and eminent author, from whom I always find great diſinclination to differ, and from whom indeed, there is no differing without ſuſpecting that one is in an error, is of opinion, that the argument between Job and his friends, turns upon this point, whether the afflictions of this world are certain marks of God's diſpleaſure, and an indication of the wickedneſs of thoſe that ſuffer; and as to the book its-ſelf, lays it down, that "in truth, the book was written in op-"poſition to the very antient opinion, which introduced two inde-"pendent principles, one of good, the other of evil[a]." Mr. Worthington has carried this notion ſtill higher, and thinks that this book was calculated for the comfort and ſupport of mankind in general, groaning under the ſpiritual bondage of Satan, and waiting for their redemption from it; that therefore this book was written to confute the two dangerous errors, which mankind had imbibed concerning the introduction of evil into the world, one of them that of the two principles, and the other the Metempſychoſis, but that

[a] Sherlock's Diſc. p. 236.

the

the far greater, *i. e.* all the controverſial part of it was levelled againſt the latter of theſe two opinions the Metempſychoſis [b]."

Mr. Warburton, who with his uſual ſagacity, had diſcovered the allegory, that lay hid under this whole ſtory, has endeavoured to prove, that this grand queſtion handled in this book, and for the diſcuſſion of which no other period can poſſibly be aſſigned, but that of the return of the Jews from the Babyloniſh captivity, is, " whether God adminiſters his government over men here, with an equal providence, ſo as that the good are always proſperous, and the bad unhappy; or whether on the contrary, there be not ſuch an apparent inequality; as that proſperity and adverſity often happen to good and bad indifferently [c]." Doctor Grey's opinion of the matter is, " that the ſole purpoſe of the ſacred writer, ſeems to be this; to compoſe a work, that ſhould remain a perpetual document of humility and patience, to all good men in affliction, from this two-fold conſideration, as on the one hand, of the infinite power, perfection and wiſdom of God, ſo on the other, of human corruption, imbecillity and ignorance, diſcoverable in the beſt of men [d]; and with regard to the argument, that the principal queſtion in diſpute is Job's perſonal integrity, *i. e.* whether Job was really at the bottom, the upright religious man he appeared to be, or an hypocrite and diſſembler both with God and man [e]," for ſo he elſewhere explains himſelf.

The reader had a right to be acquainted with all theſe ſeveral ſchemes of their reſpective authors, before he was to be preſented with one, which profeſſes to differ in one very material point from them all, and yet will be found in ſome ſenſe, to fall in with moſt of them; for with the learned prelate, I agree that there is an argument handled between theſe diſputants, " whether the afflictions of this world are certain marks of God's diſpleaſure," and that it is a point upon which, ſome part of the argument between Job and his friends turns; but that this book had a ſtill farther drift and purpoſe, than the confutation of the doctrine of the two independent principles, is what I hope to prove. And with Mr. Worthington, I can conceive, that mankind might draw ſome ſuch inference from this book, and the accounts it gives of Job's affliction and reſtoration, and reap comfort and ſupport whilſt groaning under the ſpiritual

[b] Worthington's Diſſ. p. 496. [c] Div. Leg. Vol. II. p. 401. [d] Grey's præf. Ad Lib. Job. p. 14. [e] Idem. Anſwer to Mr. Warburton's remarks. p. 50.

bondage

bondage of ſin, and waiting for their redemption from it, but that it was calculated for this very end, or that it was written to confute that dangerous error of the metempſychoſis, is what to me is utterly inconceivable, and cannot be collected from the book its-ſelf, nor the moſt ſtrained conſtructions, he has put upon it.

With Mr. Warburton, I think that ſome ſuch queſtion manifeſtly appears to be controverted, whether the good are always proſperous and the bad unhappy, but that any ſuch ſet theſis, as that of an equal providence, is the grand ſubject of the diſpute, and maintained pro and con, as the ſingle point, upon which the iſſue of the whole diſpute depended, is not I preſume, to be concluded from either the conduct or the cataſtrophe of this poem. And laſtly with Dr. Grey, I readily agree that the perſonal integrity of Job is an argument, and that too one of the moſt ſtrenuouſly controverted ones, in the whole book, but that it is the principal buſineſs of the *drama* to diſcuſs and ſettle this one point, if that be his meaning by the principal queſtion, is what I have reaſons, and I conceive too weighty and many, to doubt.

Indeed he has ſuggeſted himſelf a much better, though not preciſely the true account, of this matter, when he comes to explain himſelf; "If ſays he, by the purpoſe of a poem, be meant the thing aimed at from the beginning, and at laſt effected, the ſubmiſſion of Job is as properly the purpoſe of this book, in the argumentative part of it, as the ſettlement of Eneas is that of Virgil's; and from the purpoſe of the book I think, plainly appears the purpoſe of the writer; for if the debate is carried on, in a ſuch a manner as to furniſh proper arguments for humility and patience, if this is the point, that is all along in view, to correct in Job the contrary vices, and to reduce him to a right temper and knowledge of himſelf, and it appears at laſt, that he is thereby ſo reduced; it may very properly be affirmed, both that the purpoſe of the author was to teach thoſe virtues, and that they are really taught as well in that part of the book where they are inforced by reaſon and argument, as where they are exemplified by practice[f]."

The latter of theſe two poſitions I find no inclination to diſpute with the learned author, at leaſt if no more be meant by it, than that ſuch a document of patience and humility was to be inferred from this work, but that the ſubmiſſion of Job is properly and ul-

[f] Ibid. p. 87.

timately the purpoſe of the book, and much leſs, that the principal queſtion in it, is Job's perſonal integrity, neither the management of the diſpute nor the winding up of the *drama* will admit; for take the argument now in the very light, in which the learned author has put it, and ſee to how different a concluſion it will lead; if by the purpoſe of a poem, be meant the thing aimed at from the beginning and at laſt effected, which I agree with him is the true idea of the purpoſe of a work carried on with any degree of conſiſtency, then ſurely the reſtoration of Job to his former fortunes and ſplendor, which is the cataſtrophe of the whole poem, and not his ſubmiſſion which is but a ſingle circumſtance, miniſterial to this grand criſis, is the purpoſe of it.

Thus to purſue our author's argument, the ſettlement of Eneas is the one thing aimed at, and at laſt effected in the Eneid of Virgil, to this point all the machinery of the whole poem, all the incidents and all the buſineſs of it are directed; in the progreſs of this poem, we hear much of the perſonal piety of Eneas, are witneſſes to much diſtreſs, and find him under all the difficulties he had to encounter, perfectly reſigned to the Gods; now with what kind of reaſoning could it be concluded, that either the perſonal piety of Eneas, was the argument of this poem, or his ſubmiſſion and reſignation to the Gods, the purpoſe of it? The cataſtrophe it is agreed on all hands, was his eſtabliſhment in Italy, but then previous to this, there was prepared for him, a tedious piece of moral diſcipline, through which he was to paſs; nor could the ſettlement of him in Italy any more be accompliſhed, without ſome ſuch probation of his virtue, than the re-eſtabliſhment of Job in the land of Uz, without ſome ſuch trials; but neither in the one caſe nor the other, was ſubmiſſion the ſole purpoſe of the poem, though it was indeed the means without which, neither the ſettlement of the one, nor the re-eſtabliſhment of the other could have been effected, with any degree of decorum.

This § belongs to p. 183

The truth then is, in the interval between Job's downfall and his reſtoration, there was full ſcope for a dramatic performance; it was but introducing ſome perſons upon the ſtage, acquainted enough with his ſtory, and diſpoſed enough to teize and mortify him, and that would do the buſineſs, the converſation of courſe would be kept up with ſpirit and acrimony on both ſides, and there would be but little proſpect of ſeeing a controverſy in the hands of ſuch hardy diſputants, brought to any tolerable concluſion; this in conſequence,

would bring on much embarraſs and perplexity, each ſide, as uſual in all ſuch controverſies, eſpecially where religion is made to be concerned, maintaining its ground with ſtiffneſs and obſtinacy; and how could they be ſilenced, or the debate be brought to iſſue but by the interpoſal of ſome third perſon, or if the difficulty were worthy of it, by the interpoſal of God himſelf, in quality of the Θεος απο Μηχανης, the known reſort of all dramatic writers?

Suppoſing then the reſtoration of Job to be the buſineſs of the poem, or that this is the point to be at laſt accompliſhed through the whole intrigue and windings of the *drama*, it will be eaſy to account for the ſeveral problems by turns diſcuſſed, or which at leaſt men of learning have thought to be diſcuſſed, in the progreſs of it; for in a moral *drama*, like this, we are not to expect ſo great a revolution to be brought about in an inſtant, by means merely human, or by any ſtrange romantic ſchemes: we are not to conceive that from ſuch a wretched ſituation, as we ſee the hero of it in, at the very firſt ſetting out of the poem, and ſuch dreadful blaſphemy, as we find him venting the very firſt moment he opens his mouth, he ſhould without any farther ceremony, be reinſtated in all his former ſplendor; this had been an offence againſt all piety as well as decorum, and very juſtly incurred the cenſure a learned prelate has fixt upon it, that it had been rather calculated to harden his heart, and to reproach the providence of God[s].

How then think we, could this grand point be compaſſed conſiſtently with theſe regards, but by effecting gradually, what could not with any degree of either probability or propriety, be effected inſtantly? and here it was, that the poet was to give proof of his invention and ſkill in this kind of writing: his hero was already at the very loweſt ebb of ill fortune, in all appearance ruined and undone; he had been ſtript in one day of all his children and dependants, and of all his fortunes too and poſſeſſions, and now laid in the utmoſt affliction and deſpair, more likely to ſink under his diſgrace than ever to recover from it; ſtill he was to make his appearance upon the ſtage again, and that too in more than all his former glory; he was not only to ſurvive his diſtreſs, but to have the number of his years, as well as of every thing elſe doubled to him; yet how all this was to be brought about, and at the ſame time decency and probability preſerved, was a difficulty which

[s] Sherlock's Diſc. p. 237.

could only be equalled by another which the author labored under, and that was from ſuch ſlender materials, to produce a work of that integrity of action, which a ſcenic repreſentation required.

Here therefore he has recourſe to invention, and in order to prepare his hero for the grand change he was to undergo, and reduce him to that temper of mind, which was to fit him for ſuch a metamorphoſis, ſome art and addreſs was neceſſary; how therefore he came to fall ſo grievous a ſacrifice to the devil's reſentments; why under the confidence he entertained of his own innocence, he was ſuffered to lie in this filthy deſperate condition; wherefore were his old adverſaries thus let looſe upon him to inſult and perſecute him; were queſtions, that could not but offer themſelves, upon the very firſt view of ſo wretched a ſituation. In the hurry of ſuch tumultuous thoughts, as crowded themſelves into this enquiry, whatever deſpair could ſuggeſt, or rage inſpire, might be expected from him, the more extravagant the expreſſions of his wrath, the finer ſcope for raillery to his enemies, and the fewer pious and religious ſentiments dropt from him, the more of courſe would come from thoſe, whoſe buſineſs it was to thwart and contradict him.

Expoſtulations ſuch as theſe, were but natural to a man in his condition; and accordingly in the apocryphal book of Eſdras, after the angel had reproved his preſumption in meddling with things above his reach, we may obſerve him in great humility, reducing his complaints within leſs compaſs, and confining all his queries to this one, how it happened that the houſe of Iſrael was thus brought to ſhame? *Then anſwered I and ſaid, I beſeech thee O Lord let me have underſtanding, for it was not my mind to be curious of the high things, but of ſuch as paſs by us daily, wherefore Iſrael is given up for a reproach to the heathen? and for what cauſe the people, whom thou loved, is given over unto ungodly nations, and why the law of our fore-fathers is brought to nought, and the written covenant come to none effect?—of theſe things have I aſked* [h]. Queſtions, which if we attend to them cloſely, have more connection with Job's expoſtulations, than hath hitherto been imagined.

Not that the ſatisfying of ſuch queries, or the bare teizing of Job, was the principal errand the three friends came upon; the poet in introducing them into his ſcene, had a much more noble and pious end, it was to make them the inſtruments of mortifying him and reducing him to a proper ſenſe both of God and of himſelf, to pull the maſk

[h] 2 Eſd. iv. 23.

off from him, and diſcover a ſecret, which had hitherto laid unobſerved, and that was, that in fact he was not the man he had hitherto paſſed upon the world for, but that his ſins had brought upon him all the calamities he labored under; if this charge could once be proved upon him, it might probably pave the way for his ſubmiſſion, and by means of that to his reſtoration; but if a fair and ingenuous acknowledgment of it from his own mouth, could be come at, drawn from him upon full conviction of the truth and juſtice of all they had objected to him upon this head; if to an acknowledgment of all this, he could be prevailed upon to add a ſincere confeſſion of his guilt, and a hearty ſorrow and repentance for his ſins, the great buſineſs was fairly done, and his hero qualified to appear once more with all the dignity ſuited to his character, and all the propriety that the ſtricteſt maxims of piety, or the niceſt rules of dramatic decorum could require.

Now in the execution of ſuch a deſign, where the great drift of the poet was to bring at laſt all the diſtreſs to an happy concluſion, it was but natural to expect, that he would keep the main buſineſs of it at a diſtance, and juſt afford only light enough to raiſe the hopes or flatter the wiſhes of this hero. It was too ſoon to give him all the explicit aſſurance he intended, of his reſtoration, before he had received all the teſtimony he was to give in his turn of repentance, and therefore there was a long proceſs of experiments to be made upon him, and he was firſt to be thoroughly ſifted and examined into, upon the ſubject of his paſt life and converſation, and either a ſatisfactory account to be given of that, or in lieu of it, undoubted ſecurity for his future behaviour.

It is in the courſe of theſe experiments upon Job, that we meet with all thoſe altercations between the reſpective diſputants, upon ſeveral ſubjects, which have ſometimes paſſed for abſtract ſpeculations, at others, for formal arguments, and at others, for ſet theſes, which again in their turns, have been miſtaken for the argument and buſineſs of the whole poem. To give the reader a taſte of this kind of reaſoning I would only refer him to Mr. Worthington. "The diſpute ſays he, was about matter of opinion, the proper object of error, ſome abſtruſe ſpeculative point, that admitted ſo much ſtrenuous contention, without advancing a ſtep, or coming to any eclairciſſement about it." And a little lower he explains the principle, upon which Job's friends argue, "that ſin is the cauſe of ſuffering, or that moral is the cauſe of natural

tural evil[i];" and the truth is, ſome ſuch principle there ſeems advanced by Eliphaz, in the opening of the debate, and great ſtreſs laid thereon in the proſecution of it; but that it is a principle, which they either come at by formal deductions of reaſoning, or carry on in a ſet logical diſputation, not only the manner of introducing it, but the management of their argument gives not the leaſt room to conceive.

The firſt mention of any thing, which could give color to any ſuch *hypotheſis*, is what Eliphaz, after reproaching Job with his former ſufficiency, and inſulting him upon his preſent humiliation, throws out; " *Remember I pray thee, whoever periſhed being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off? 'tis even as I have ſeen, they that plow iniquity and ſow wickedneſs reap the ſame*; ſo again Bildad, " *Enquire I pray thee of the former age, and prepare thyſelf to ſearch of their fathers! ſhall not they teach thee and tell thee and utter words out of their heart? Can the ruſh grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water, which is yet in his greenneſs and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb. So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrite's hope ſhall periſh*[l].

Is this reaſoning or arguing like a philoſopher, upon matter of opinion? what is it elſe but a popular harangue on a matter of fact, an appeal in the firſt place, to their own experience and obſervation, and the next, to the traditions and experience of their anceſtors about one of the moſt ſimple obvious queſtions in nature; and accordingly it is upon the ſame footing, that Job anſwers all they had been ſaying, *this is the one thing therefore I ſaid it, he deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked*; *if the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent*[m]. And again he reſumes the whole argument, and concludes it with obſerving that the good and the bad are alike in their death as well their life, there is no difference at leaſt that man can diſcover, *they ſhall lie down alike in the duſt and the worm ſhall cover them*[n].

He puts we ſee, his own obſervation and experience upon the ſame credit and rank with theirs, in the deciding of this queſtion, and inſiſts as he very well might, that if that was the point upon which their charge againſt him depended, it was not likely to turn out in their favor, for as far as fact and obſervation were of

[i] Worthington's Diſ. p. 482. [k] Ch. iv. 7. [l] Ch. viii. 8.
[m] Ch. ix. 22. [n] Ch. xxi. 26.

weight

weight in determining this matter, he ſeemed to have got on the ſafer ſide of the queſtion; indeed there was no avoiding an appeal of this kind, where one of the very errands his friends came upon, was to impeach his innocence, that was a caſe of too delicate a nature, to admit perhaps of direct proof, and if it had, there had been an end of the controverſy, and of the *drama* at once; but the putting it upon an iſſue ſo very precarious, or at leaſt upon a point ſo diſputable, as the actual puniſhment of ſin in every inſtance, and on every ſinner, was a circumſtance that was not likely to be decided by any logical form of argument, but more likely to protract the diſpute, and to leave it in the end, juſt in the ſame obſcurity they found it. *Here comes in a ¶ from p. 178.*

One therefore of the many topicks of debate no doubt it is, "whether the afflictions of this world are certain marks of God's diſpleaſure," as the learned prelate has ſuggeſted; and if by "moral being the cauſe of natural evil", Mr. Worthington mean the ſame thing, it will readily be allowed him, but that this principle is debated, as he contends, as the ſet, theſis of the diſputation, or handled as matter of ſpeculation, and not as matter of fact: that πόθεν κακον, or the origin of evil, is the problem to be reſolved in the iſſue of this diſpute, though there be much talk and much plauſible harangue about the promiſcuous diſpenſation of good and evil in the world, I can no more prevail upon myſelf to believe, than that it was the phenomena of the tides, thunder and lightning, or the origin, of ſprings that Elihu appears to account for, when he ſpeaks ſo philoſophically as he does, of *ſhutting up the ſea within doors, of dividing the courſes of the waters*, or *a way for the lightning of thunder* [o].

The caſe with regard to all theſe is much the ſame; for before the grand cataſtrophe of Job's reſtoration could poſſibly take place, his ſubmiſſion was to be effected, but how could this be done without firſt convincing him of his errors; ſtill in the way to this there lay ſome difficulties, for a downright attack upon his innocence was not conſiſtent with that addreſs, which was neceſſary to lead him inſenſibly, to an ingenuous confeſſion of his faults, ſo round a charge might throw him into diſorder, and therefore Eliphaz opens it with an indirect inſinuation, and leaves Job to make the inference; *Remember I pray thee who ever periſhed that was innocent* [p]? the queſtion

[o] Ch. xxxviii.

no

no doubt was inſidious enough, but Job could be at no loſs to make the application.

This therefore of courſe, brings on the diſpute between them, whether his ſufferings naturally and neceſſarily inferred his guilt? but obſerve, that this is a queſtion merely incidental, that aroſe out of the particular circumſtances of his caſe, charged as he now was, with having brought upon himſelf all the evils he complained of; and ſo far from being the principal queſtion, makes but a very inconſiderable part of what is here debated; no wonder therefore, that in the progreſs of this diſpute, we are entertained occaſionally with ſome of the fineſt ſentiments upon the wiſdom, juſtice and goodneſs of God, as they ſtand confeſſed both in the moral and natural world; upon the origin of man's weakneſs and corruption; upon the promiſcuous diſtribution of good and evil; upon the uſe and deſign of afflictions in bringing down that ſpiritual pride, which is ſo dangerous to our virtue; all theſe have a neceſſary, though ſome perhaps a more remote connection, with the main drift of the poem, and are therefore introduced, not as ſpeculative problems, but merely as caſual topicks of either diſpute or declamation, as occaſion offered, or the buſineſs of the drama demanded.

In ſhort, all theſe controverted, aſſerted, or harangued upon as they incidentally are, were but ſo many parts and branches of one grand ſcheme, calculated to work ſome of them as arguments to prove, others as motives to enforce, and others again, as inſtances to explain the neceſſity of his ſubmiſſion in order to his future reſtoration; and that this alone was the principal object of the poem, the event of it ſhould ſeem to place beyond all doubt, for plain it is, that he is in the concluſion, reſtored to more than all his former glory, which indeed is properly ſpeaking the cataſtrophe of the whole *drama*.

And yet I know not how, this is an obſervation, that has not once fallen in the way of any, even the lateſt and beſt writers upon this book; perhaps it is, that we have been all along taught to conſider what is called the argumentative part of it, or the *drama*, as ſomething diſtinct from the narrative in the prologue, and becauſe they differ in the ſtile and manner of compoſition, one relating coolly ſo many facts, the other working up under a poetical dreſs, ſo many diſputes and controverſies between ſome heated diſputants, which are at firſt ſight too abſtruſe and intricate to connect with the narrative, our attention has been confined to the cloſing of the arguments, when to have a full

view of the whole, it ought to have been carried on to the winding up of the poem.

Whether that ſtrange conceit of the learned Schultens, that both the introduction and concluſion of this poem had been added by ſome later writer, had any weight with his very learned editor, I will not take upon me to ſay, but this to me is manifeſt, that had he not ſtopt ſhort where he has done, but purſued the thread he had once in hand; had he after eſtabliſhing the two leading truths, that the perſonal integrity of Job is the queſtion, and his ſubmiſſion the purpoſe, though not the main one, of the *drama*, proceeded to the cloſe of the whole poem, where Job is in fact reſtored, he would have ſeen his own ſcheme completely rounded, and that ſubmiſſion of Job's, which he has taken ſo much pains and with ſo much ſucceſs, to make out, amply rewarded by his reſtoration. To reduce him indeed to terms of ſubmiſſion was one point, and that a conſiderable one, gained in the argumentative part, but for God in the cataſtrophe of the poem, to crown that ſubmiſſion of his with the reſtoration of him to all his former happineſs, was bringing the work to a moſt glorious concluſion, and giving that finiſhing ſtroke to a ſcheme, which in fact, had been concerting through the whole intrigue of the *drama*.

Now that this is really the caſe, that the main buſineſs of the poem was the reſtoration of Job, will be incumbent upon us to prove, as well becauſe it is a thing, which ſeems not hitherto to have been rightly underſtood, as becauſe we apprehend it to be the very key which leads throughout the whole difficulty. Indeed its being the cataſtrophe ſhould ſeem a circumſtance, that decides at once this controverſy, becauſe as this is the centre of the whole, all the parts like ſo many lines, ſhould be traced from it, and be their deviations ever ſo many or intricate, yet from hence, as the central point of all the affairs, ſhould all the affairs of the poem be concluded.

To come indeed at this haſtily and precipitately, without preparing the reader by any hint or incident for ſo unexpected a criſis, would be an offence againſt all the rules of good-writing, and therefore it is but reaſonable to expect, that the preceding events ſhould be contributing all along in ſome ſhape or other, to the grand event of all, and unfolding gradually and inſenſibly the plot, by throwing out as occaſion offered, ſome leading circumſtance, upon which it was to turn. Hence it is a rule among the great criticks in this art, that the cataſtrophe be drawn from the very middle of all the buſi-

neſs of the drama, and that the very knots, which ſeem to embarraſs the whole ſubject, ſhould at laſt ſerve for the opening of it, as if they were laid for that purpoſe.

How conformably to theſe maxims, the poet has conducted his piece, will beſt be ſeen in the very article now under examination; the reſtoration of Job is not only the cataſtrophe of the poem, but is the very knot which cauſes all the embarraſs between him and his three friends; and upon the looſing of which, an inſight is opened into the whole ſcheme; this is the point which is labored all along, and the reader is prepared for the final event not by hints only or innuendo's, but at length by more explicit aſſurances, and at laſt by downright promiſes; which how perverſely ſoever Job thinks proper to doubt or diſbelieve, in order to ſupport the diſpute, yet turn out in the end, agreeably to all that had been engaged for, and if they did perhaps exceed his expectations, it was only becauſe he could not prevail upon himſelf to build upon authority ſo queſtionable, as that of thoſe hands from whence thoſe aſſurances proceeded.

To come then to the point; no ſooner had Job concluded that blaſphemous expoſtulation of his with God, and abandoning himſelf to deſpair, wiſhed again and again, that he might have an entire end put to that being, which was now become inſupportable to him, than Eliphaz under pretence of a divine inſpiration, takes him to taſk upon the ſubject of his profane remonſtrances, and hinting that poſſibly, all his ſufferings might be owing to his ſins, ſuggeſts by way of comfort to him, that in the ſcheme of providence all theſe might probably have a very ſalutary effect, and end at laſt in his being reſtored, upon proper ſubmiſſions made on his part to the divine favor in the firſt place, and in the next, to all his former glory [p].

Thus therefore he addreſſes him, CHAP. V. *Behold happy is the man whom God correcteth, therefore deſpiſe not thou the chaſtning of the Almighty: for he maketh ſore and bindeth up: he woundeth and his hands make whole: he ſhall deliver thee in ſix troubles, yea in ſeven there ſhall no evil touch thee: in famine he ſhall redeem thee from death, and in war from the power of the ſword: thou ſhalt be hid from the ſcourge of the tongue: neither ſhalt thou be afraid of deſtruction when it cometh: at deſtruction and famine thou ſhalt laugh, neither ſhalt thou be afraid of the beaſts of the field: for thou ſhalt be in league with the ſtones of the field: and the beaſts of the field ſhall be at peace with thee,*

[p] Ch. iv. 7

and

and thou ſhalt know that thy tabernacle ſhall be in peace; and thou ſhalt viſit thy habitation, and ſhalt not ſin: thou ſhalt know alſo that thy ſeed ſhall be great, and thine offſpring as the graſs of the earth: thou ſhalt come to thy grave in a full age, like a ſhock of corn cometh in his ſeaſon[q]. Then to give this diſcovery its full weight, and make it paſs for a ſecret, which had been come at in ſome extraordinary manner, he concludes, *Lo this, we have ſearched it, ſo it is: hear it, and know it for thy good.*

CHAP. VI. Upon this Job complains, how little he ſeemed to know of his caſe in adminiſtring ſuch conſolation; that ſo wretched was his being become already to him, that the protracting it, even under all the hopes they had flattered him with, was one of the moſt uncomfortable conſiderations, they could have ſuggeſted to him, that he deſired no ſuch favor at God's hands, but rather that an end might at once be put to it; for what appearance had he of either ſtrength or ſpirits to juſtify ſuch an expectation; *what is my ſtrength, that I ſhould hope, or what is mine end, that I ſhould prolong my life?* or what materials did he ſuppoſe him compoſed of, to ſtand the ſhock he now did, and at the ſame time conceive them durable enough to continue under it. *Is my ſtrength the ſtrength of ſtones? or is my fleſh of braſs?* No; if he were really the friend he profeſſed to be, and not the falſe one he ſuſpected, all he deſired was his compaſſion: he aſked no other favor at his hands, much leſs was he ſollicitous about what he ſeemed ſo ready to offer him, any reſtoration of his being, under the hard terms of enduring it. *Did I ſay, bring unto me, or give a reward of your ſubſtance? Or deliver me from the enemies hand, or redeem me from the hand of the mighty?* that was a boon it was time enough for him to grant, when he ſhould condeſcend to aſk it.

CHAP. VII. In the mean while he might take this anſwer once for all, that life was not the point he was concerned about, but the very reverſe, *ſo that my ſoul chooſeth ſtrangling*, any the moſt painful death *rather than life*; *I loath it*; *I would not live alway, let me alone for my days are vanity.*

CHAP. VIII. It is in much the ſame manner, and with much the ſame ſucceſs too, that the ſecond friend approaches him, for Bil-

[q] VELO TEKETA tranſlated *and ſhalt not ſin*, were better tranſlated, *and ſhalt not be diſappointed.* Non fruſtraberis, *i. e.* quum viſitabis habitaculum tuum, ejuſque ſtatum perluſtrabis, non invenies te deſtitutum et rebus neceſſariis carentem, ſed abunde potius inſtructum. confer Jud. xx. 16. VELO IAKATI. & *non aberrabat*, quæ eſt propria verbi ſignificatio; applicari interdum ſolet ad peccatum, quaſi *aberrationem* a lege. De Dieu in loc.

dad, firſt reproving him for the impiety of his expoſtulations with God, upon this miſerable ſituation of his, inſinuates to him by way of conſolation, that bad as his affairs were, yet they were not deſperate, his children indeed had been cut off, but for himſelf he was ſtill ſubſiſting, and if he took but the proper meaſures, might ſtill continue to do ſo, and emerge one day out of all his ſufferings with the greater glory for having undergone them; *If thou wouldeſt ſeek unto God betimes, and make thy ſupplications to the Almighty, if thou wert pure and upright; ſurely now would he awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous; though thy beginning were ſmall, yet thy latter end ſhould greatly encreaſe* *.

CHAP. IX. And how does Job receive all this? why with the utmoſt neglect both of the council and the counſellor, he repeats, that this was not the point with him, however he might miſtake it; *though I were perfect yet would I not know my ſoul, I would deſpiſe my life.*

CHAP. X. He goes on with his old plea, that life was none ſo agreeable a thing to him, as to be worth his contending for, that it was already grown ſo wretched, that his ſoul was weary of it, begs only a little reſpite from his extreme anguiſh and pain, and then wiſhes to go *whence he ſhould not return, even to the land of darkneſs and of the ſhadow of death, a land of darkneſs, as darkneſs itſelf, without any order, and where the light is as darkneſs.* As little hopes had he of any future ſtate, as any wiſhes to continue in this, all that he begged of God was neither the protracting nor the reſtoring of his being, but the utter extinction of it.

CHAP. XI. Upon this Zophar the third friend, goes to work roundly with him, and tells him that all his lies, doubt and diſbelief

* It appears from the ſcope of the book of Job, that it was the general ſenſe and belief of mankind concerning divine providence at that time, and in the moſt antient times before, that God did never grievouſly afflict righteous men in this life, or ſuffer them to periſh under temporal adverſities, and this notion is fully aſſerted in the whole viii^th^ chapter, and other parts of this book, and in this, Job and his three friends are agreed. On this account it is, that they ſo conſtantly accuſe Job of being a ſinner and an hypocrite, though he appear to be righteous, and therefore they preſſed him to confeſs his ſins, and to humble himſelf before God, *who would certainly reſtore him to his proſperity*, if he was but penitent and truly religious; and the ſame opinion of the equity of the divine proceedings, made Job who knew his own ſincerity and integrity, think that God was hard upon him, and did not deal with him, as he uſed to do with his faithful and true worſhippers; and by the afflictions which he laid upon him, gave occaſion to his friends, to arraign and calumniate his uprightneſs and innocence, as feigned and inſincere. But God made him at laſt underſtand, that it was fooliſh and impious in him to arrogate ſo much righteouſneſs to himſelf, who was but duſt and aſhes, and that as he was not able to comprehend the power and works of God, and the judgments of providence, which were unſearchable, he ought notwithſtanding his afflictions, to have been more patient, and to have concluded that God was juſt, and to have without repining *truſted in him for a deliverance.* Jackſon. Belief of a future ſtate, *&c.* p. 34.

ought

ought to be expoſed as ſo much diſſimulation only and hypocriſy, that the argument which had been preſſed upon him, ſo very particularly by both the former friends, deſerved more attention than he had paid it, and was more unanſwerable than he had conceived it to be, and therefore he repeats it in all its full extent and latitude, that he might the better feel the weight of it. *If thou prepare thine heart, and ſtretch out thine hands unto God; if iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedneſs dwell in thy tabernacles, for then ſhalt thou lift up thy face without ſpot; yea thou ſhalt be ſteadfaſt and ſhalt not fear: becauſe thou ſhalt forget thy miſery, and remember it as waters that paſs away; and thine age ſhall be clearer than the noon day; thou ſhalt ſhine forth, thou ſhalt be as the morning; and thou ſhalt be ſecure becauſe there is hope, yea thou ſhalt dig about thee, and thou ſhalt take thy reſt in ſafety, alſo thou ſhalt lie down and none ſhall make thee afraid, yea many ſhall make ſuit unto thee.*

CHAP. XII. To this Job takes occaſion to give his opinion at large, not of Zophar's part only, but of the parts they all three had been acting, and with a ſneer upon all their mighty wiſdom, refers them to the beaſts of the field, the fowls of the air, the earth its ſelf or the fiſhes of the ſea, as teaching all of them, better philoſophy than they had been all along advancing; that with the *antient of days ſurely was wiſdom and underſtanding*, yet plain it is, that the contrary of all they had been flattering him with, was the courſe of his providence, both in the moral and the natural world, for *behold he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again*, he *ſhutteth up a man and there can be no opening: behold he withholdeth the waters and they dry up.*

CHAP. XIII. After a long detail of God's wiſdom and power diſplayed in ſeveral inſtances into which he inſinuates, he had at leaſt as good an inſight as they, he takes occaſion to return the lie they had given him in the courſe of the diſpute, and calls them all *forgers of lies and phyſicians of no value*, men that preſcribed they knew not what, or if they did, that to his apprehenſion, the remedy was full as bad as the diſeaſe.

CHAP. XIV. He then concludes with aſſerting the utter impoſſibility of any ſuch future appearance, as they had been ſuggeſting he might one day make, that man, in the beſt view of him, *hath but a ſhort time to live, and is full of miſery, that he cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down, flieth as a ſhadow and continueth not*; that it was not probable ſo weak a creature ſhould be the

object

object of God's notice, or that he who was born of a woman, *ſeeing his days are appointed, and the number of his months fixt beyond which he could not paſs*, ſhould continue beyond that time; that it was full as improbable a production, *a clean thing could be brought out of an unclean one*, as that a man ſhould die the death he was about to die, and live again; that therefore upon their own principles it could never be; for ſuppoſing him to be the ſinner they repreſented him, then it would be inconſiſtent with God's juſtice to reſtore him, for *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean one? not one.* But let him be what he would, there was no hopes of a man in ſuch circumſtances, *for though there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will ſprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not ceaſe; though the root thereof wax old in the earth; and the ſtock thereof die in the ground, yet through the ſcent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant: yet man dieth and waſteth away, yea man giveth up the ghoſt, and where is he? As the waters fail from the ſea, and the flood decayeth, and drieth up, ſo man lieth down, and riſeth not till the heavens be no more, they ſhall not awake, nor be raiſed out of their ſleep*, ſo little belief or notion either, had Job of a reſurrection.

The ſame doctrine he infers again, ver. 18. *Surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of its place; the waters wear the ſtones, thou waſheſt away the things which grow out of the earth, and thou deſtroyeſt the hope of man*[r]. In the mean time therefore the beſt argument that could be given of the truth of their doctrine, would be for God to ſuſpend a while his ſeverities, and ſuffer him to lie in ſome ſecret place obſcure and unobſerved, till his wrath was paſt: that if it was, as they pretended, in the ſcheme of providence to reſtore him, the kinder part would be to appoint him ſome fixt time for his exile from the world, and at the expiration of it, to enlarge him, and that interval he would engage to fill as it became him, with abſolute reſignation; whereas under the preſent rigorous treatment of him, when his ſteps were numbered, his ſins watched, and *his tranſgreſſions ſealed* as it were, *in a bag*[s], to be produced in evidence againſt him, he had not ſpace for reſignation.

CHAP.

[r] Horum nihil, ubi ſemel corruit aut abſumptum eſt, inſtaurari ſe patitur. Grey in loc.

[s] HATUM BIZROR PISHAL. Commentators are by no means agreed in the meaning of theſe words, but if as a learned author has obſerved, that in all proſecutions, the advocates carried in thoſe days as in our own, their papers or inſtruments into the courts in bags, then the meaning will be, *the indictment thou haſt againſt me for my tranſgreſſions is ſealed*

or

CHAP. XV. In reply to all this, Eliphaz reſumes the argument, and inſiſts that Job had given but ſlender proof of that maſterly wiſdom and experience he pretended to, in thus prevaricating upon the ſubject, and under a ſhrewd obſervation, uſhered in with all the ſolemnity of a traditional revelation, made originally to ſome very diſtinguiſhed perſons, inſinuates a very pertinent remark, that one great ſymptom of his being the bad man they ſuſpected, was, that he was adding infidelity to deſpair, that *he believeth not that he ſhall return out of darkneſs, and he is waited for of the ſword.* Men in ſuch circumſtances grow deſperate, have no hopes of things ever going better with them, and therefore ruſh upon their maker's vengeance out of meer deſpair; under this conviction, *that he ſhall not be rich, neither ſhall his ſubſtance continue, neither ſhall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth, that he ſhall not depart out of darkneſs, that the flame ſhall dry up his branches, and by the breath of his mouth he ſhall go away*, v. 29. The wicked man proceeds to ſtretch out his hand againſt God, and to ſtrengthen himſelf againſt the Almighty, fortified *with collops of fat upon his flanks*, declares open war againſt him, and ſets him at defiance.

CHAP. XVI. Fired at ſo ſevere a charge, Job refers them to his perſon, a wretched ſpectacle as it now was, and bids them ſee, where was all that fatneſs they upbraided him with; was he not *filled with wrinkles, and did not his leanneſs bear witneſs to his face?* then complaining of the perſecution from his friends, and the hard meaſures he had experienced from God, he reverts to the old concluſion, that in the courſe of nature, a body ſo emaciated as his could not laſt long, much leſs make its appearance again; *when a few years are come, then I ſhall go the way, whence I ſhall not return.* For their parts, he could by no means prevail upon himſelf to believe them ſincere in the very thing they had been all along flattering him with.

CHAP. XVII. For his own, he declares once more, and it is a declaration the reader would do well to attend to, that the grave, into which he was now dropping, was the only refuge he wiſhed for, and calls God to witneſs to the truth of his declaration, not from any thing comfortable in the proſpect of riſing again from it, but from its being as he conceived, a reſting place from all his labors, an utter extinction of all exiſtence. He had long ſhook hands with

or cloſed *up in a bag.* Patronos litium inſtrumenta in ſacculis recondita ſecum ad judices tuliſſe, eumque morem indicari Job. xiv. 17. arbitratur Bolduccius Citatus a Petro Zornio, &c. Bruning. Ant. p. 127.

the

the grave as his houſe, *had ſaid to corruption, thou art my father, and to the worm, thou art my mother and my ſiſter. And where is now my hope? as for my hope who ſhall ſee it? they ſhall go down to the bars of the pit, when our reſt together is in the duſt.*

CHAP. XVIII. Here Bildad addreſſes himſelf in the firſt place, to the two friends, his companions, and tells them that it was high time for them now to lay aſide all that addreſs and inſinuation, that they had hitherto dealt in, and come to a downright charge upon Job; and then, he goes to work in plain terms with him, upon the ſubject of his misfortunes being brought upon him by his ſins, and aſks him, *ſhall the earth be forſaken for thee? or ſhall the rock be removed out of its place?* talk as extravagantly as he pleaſed, and rage as tragically as he would, the eternal laws of truth and reaſon were ſtill the ſame for all that, "the wicked would be diſtinguiſhed by ſome ſignal marks of God's judgment;" and leaves him to make the inference.

And here let me juſt obſerve, before we come to the grand criſis of this whole diſpute in the next chapter, that though the diſcuſſion of Job's innocence aſſerted roundly as it was, on his ſide, and either obliquely or directly impeached on the other, be a ſubject of much harangue and controverſy between them, yet it is not by any means the argument in iſſue before them, for that we ſee, is all along the ſingle point of his reſtoration, the poſſibility of it in the nature of things, the probability of it in his circumſtances, and the deſirableneſs of it in his own particular caſe; one or other of theſe conſiderations brings the matter of his innocence in courſe before them, becauſe it were a jeſt either for them to engage, or for him to believe that he ſhould be reſtored, till his innocence was either juſtified, or what was likely to come to the ſame thing, his guilt was attoned for by his confeſſion of it.

CHAP. XIX. Now therefore he begins to relent, and having dropt more than once, in the courſe of the debate, the conſciouſneſs he felt of his guilt, he now comes over gradually to the argument they had been preſſing, of his reſtoration. He obſerves that the whole bent of their diſcourſe had been all along to teize and provoke him: that the error he had been maintaining, ſuppoſing it an error, affected himſelf only and not them. *Be it indeed that I have erred, mine error remaineth with me*; for what concerned it them, whether he was ever to be reſtored again or not, himſelf indeed it did concern, and that too very greatly, yet he was willing to continue

nue ſtill under it; but however as things between them had gone ſo far, he grew the more willing to make ſome conceſſions in order to bring them to a concluſion; and therefore he lays before them in one view the calamitous condition of all his affairs, the oppreſſion he labored under from his enemies, the coldneſs he obſerved in his friends, the abhorrence his wife had conceived of him, and the contempt that all his domeſticks ſhewed him.

CHAP. XIX. To all theſe he adds the bittereſt and moſt diſcouraging circumſtance of all, a circumſtance that foreboded but ill to the flouriſhing appearance his perſon was, according to them, one day to make, and that was, that *My bone cleaveth to my ſkin, and to my fleſh, and I am eſcaped with the ſkin of my teeth.* Here he cries out for mercy; *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me; why do ye perſecute me as God, and are not ſatisfied with my fleſh?* Turn but back to the laſt commiſſion that Satan had from God, and you will ſee the meaning of this expoſtulation; Job's *bone and his fleſh only* were permitted to be practiſed upon, and there was a clauſe of reſerve in it to *ſave his life*, this was not to be put to hazard on any account; the error therefore he he had ſo long and ſo obſtinately perſiſted in, he now ſolemnly retracts, and deſires therefore that what he is now going to declare to them, might if it were poſſible, be recorded in the moſt public manner, and engraved in legible characters, upon the moſt durable materials. *O that my words were now written, O that they were printed in a book, that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever, for I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth, and though after my ſkin worms deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God; whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf and my eyes ſhall behold and not another, though my reins be conſumed within me*[t].

I take the liberty to tranſcribe a note of doctor Grey's, into the margin, not by any means to inſinuate his being of the ſame opinion with me, with regard to this celebrated text before us, but to

[t] Importunis inſtantiis & declamationibus ſupra modum fatigatus, Jobus non immerito amices exprobrat incredibilem quandam acerbitatem, per quam, ſine ullo commiſerationis ſenſu, calamitatem in ſe atrociſſimam, immane quantum irritabant, & plane intolerandam reddebant; hunc cumulum horroris a ſe removet et repellit, ſortem ſuam amariſſiman complorando, quod cum liquidiſſima innocentia in odium Deo, in horrorem hominibus adductus, omnium telis expoſitus, quin iiſdem plane depoſitus ac confectus jaceret. deinde ad amicos converſus iterum, flagrantiſſimo adfectu epitaphium ſibi conſcribit vivo, atque nobiliſſimum illum carmen ſepulcro ſuo inſcribi jubet, &c. Grey. Argumentum in Ch. xix.

profit myſelf of his authority, with regard to my own ſentiments of the conduct of the diſpute between Job and his three friends, and to ſhew that matters are coming to ſome iſſue or other, in this very chapter, though it has not been hitherto obſerved. Job as he remarks, teized and worn out with the importunate inſtances and harangues of the three friends, reproaches them not undeſervedly, with their inhumanity, and then addreſſing himſelf to them, writes as it were his own epitaph, and orders thoſe noble lines to be ingraved upon his monument.

If this be not the concluſion of the whole debate upon this ſubject, between Job and his three friends, it has no iſſue at all; if it import his conviction at laſt, that he was one day to make his appearance again, and that emaciated ſtate of body, in which he now appeared was to be changed to a more flouriſhing and vigorous one, it certainly does the whole buſineſs and anſwers all the ends of the *drama*; it prepares the reader for meeting him again in the concluſion of it as he was promiſed, in all his glory, and it effectually ſilences all the arguments, that had been built upon this ſuppoſition, in the progreſs of it. Nor could there have been raiſed any doubt or difficulty at all in this matter, had not men's attention been confined to ſome ſtrange problem or other that they ſaw, or thought they ſaw to be diſcuſſed in this poem, and in queſt of that, ſuffered themſelves to be drawn off from attending to the main buſineſs of the *drama*, which was plainly the reſtoration of Job to his former ſtate both of body and fortunes.

This point was now gained upon Job, or rather drawn from him by the addreſs and perſeverance of his three friends, and I am perſuaded, could we only come at the true ſenſe of the following verſe, which is certainly obſcure, and as Dr. Grey obſerves upon it, wretchedly tranſlated, we ſhould find that this was the very caſe *. *But ye ſhould ſay, why perſecute we him, ſeeing the root of this matter is found in me* †? i. e. After ſo frank a declaration as you have here drawn from me, ye ought to change your note, as well as I, and ceaſe to perſecute me, ſeeing you are now come at the root of the whole matter. *Now then, be ye afraid of the ſword*, take care that

* *Ci tomeru* melius *dicatis*. Grot. *Dicere debueratis*, Druſ. *Quin potius dicetis*. Vatab.

† *Radix cauſæ* pro materia litis, criminationis, condemnationis, nempe omne illud unde amici *hactenus* Jobum improbum aut hypocritam evincere voluerunt. Grey. Poſt hanc fiduciæ meæ ſignificationem adducor in eam ſpem fore, ut æquius ac moderatius de me ſentiatis, & deſinatis laceſſere, ſiquidem ſermo ille meus *in me radicem* habet, non ex ore illa fluunt ſed ex corde, eſt fides illa in me tandem radicata. Fr. Spanh. Hiſt. Job. 425.

very vengeance you have been all along denouncing againſt me, fall not on your own heads, *for wrath bringeth the puniſhments of the ſword, that ye may know there is a judgment*; i. e. I agree with you in the judgments of God falling upon ſinners, but take care it be not the caſe with you your ſelves. What confirms me in thinking this to be the true account of theſe words is, Zophar's feeling inſtantly the reproof, and acknowledging, as he does, that *he had heard the check of his reproach.*

But ſtill there lay beyond all this, another point to be managed, and that was to bring him to give up, what he had been maintaining with ſuch obſtinacy, the confidence he had of his innocence; upon this therefore Zophar goes to work once more, but neither he nor his friends gain much ground upon Job in this particular: it was victory enough to have carried the point they had done; the deciſion of ſo delicate a charge is reſerved for the ſearcher of all hearts, and therefore Elihu firſt, and then God himſelf determines upon it, and what the three friends could not manage, they bring about, his confeſſion of his former ſins, and his repentance in duſt and aſhes.

The bringing theſe two queſtions to iſſue, was eſſential to the buſineſs of the poem, for it had been as much an offence againſt decorum, to have reinſtated Job in all his former health and proſperity, in direct oppoſition to all his convictions, or in flat contradiction to all his wiſhes, as for God to give his ſanction to all this great revolution in his favor, before the grand queſtion touching his innocence was reſolved, and in conſequence of that, his ſubmiſſion had been tendered.

This therefore is the next thing they labor, nor do we hear any more, after this ſo very explicit a declaration on the ſide of Job, of the old bone of controverſy, his reſtoration: he had already given them his ſenſe at large upon this matter, nor do they ever reſume it; only Eliphaz takes occaſion to explain more at large what had been meant by it, and by drawing at full length the great benefits he was likely to reap from a revolution, of which he had declared himſelf ſo fully convinced, ſuggeſts what weight it ought to have upon him in bringing him to ſubmiſſion.

CHAP. XX. *Acquaint now thyſelf with God and be at peace, thereby good ſhall come unto thee: receive I pray thee the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart: if thou return to the Almighty, thou ſhalt be built up, thou ſhalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles. Then thou ſhalt lay up gold as duſt, and the*

gold of Ophir as the ſtones of the rocks; yea the Almighty ſhall be thy defence, and thou ſhalt have plenty of ſilver; for then thou ſhalt have delight in the Almighty, and ſhalt lift up thy face unto God: thou ſhalt make thy prayer unto him, and he ſhall hear thee, and thou ſhalt pay thy vows, &c. ver. 23. This is the laſt we hear of this matter, and here it is mentioned only as a motive to Job's ſubmiſſion, and not as a matter which was to be controverted, and Job accordingly pays no farther regard to it, but returns to the old ſtory the aſſerting of his innocence.

I choſe to bring theſe together into one point of view, that the cataſtrophe of this *drama* might appear not precipitate, but that the ſeveral incidents might be ſeen working all along, more or leſs directly, to this grand event, for which the reader had been but ill prepared, if he had neither heard of the friends arguments, nor of Job's conviction upon the ſingle point of his reſtoration. I have only to add, that what they diſpute, Elihu in quality of a prophet, affirms; he firſt convicteth Job of impiety, in aſſuming all along to himſelf ſuch ſinleſs perfection as he had done; *Surely thou haſt ſpoken in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, ſaying, I am clean without tranſgreſſion, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me*: in the next place, he opens to him the conduct of providence, in bringing back ſinners to a ſenſe of duty, by the miniſtry of his prophets, by dreams and viſions, which however little attended to, though perhaps God *ſpeak once and twice and man perceiveth it not*, yet are deſigned as ſo many inſtruments of the converſion of ſinners, and intended to pave the way for reſtoring them again to the divine favor, and their own former ſituation in the world: then in order to bring the matter home to his own caſe, he refers Job to a piece or two of hiſtory in his own family, of which the reader has been already apprized, for the truth of the doctrine.

CHAP. XXXIII. *Thus, in a dream in a viſion of the night, when deep ſleep falleth upon men, in ſlumbrings upon the bed, then God openeth the ears of men, and ſealeth their inſtruction: that he may not draw man from his purpoſe, and hide pride man from man, he keepeth back his ſoul from the pit, and his life from periſhing by the ſword: he is chaſtened alſo with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with ſtrong pains, ſo that his life abhorreth bread, and his ſoul dainty meat: his fleſh is conſumed away that it cannot be ſeen, and his bones that were not ſeen, ſtick out, yea his ſoul draweth nearer to the grave, and his ſoul to the deſtroyers. If there be a meſſenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thouſand,*

to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs;—then he is gracious unto him, and ſaith, deliver him from going down into the pit, I have found a ranſom: his fleſh ſhall be freſher than a child's, he ſhall return to the days of his youth, he ſhall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him; and he ſhall ſee his face with joy, for he will render to man his righteouſneſs, ver. 15---29.

CHAP. XXXVI. The next inſtance he gives him is, we may remember, of a ſtill more extraordinary nature, where another prince of his family had been actually in chains, and yet reſtored again to his crown and kingdom. *If kings be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction; then he ſheweth them their work and their tranſgreſſions, that they have exceeded: he openeth their ear alſo to diſcipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity. If they obey and ſerve him, they ſhall ſpend their days in proſperity.—Even ſo he would have removed thee out of the ſtrait into a broad place where there is no ſtraitneſs, and that which ſhould be ſet on thy table ſhould be full of fatneſs.*

Judge now what is the buſineſs of this whole poem; a reſtoration of Job, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar all, not inſinuate only but plainly and expreſsly declare and engage for, upon terms of his ſubmiſſion; a reſtoration of Job, Job himſelf firſt treats as undeſirable in his preſent circumſtances, then impoſſible in the nature of things, and afterwards improbable, conſidering the ſituation of affairs between him and God; ſuch a reſtoration, his friends at length convince him was neither the improbable, the impoſſible, nor the undeſirable thing he thought it, but the reverſe of all theſe; upon which he retracts as he ought, his opinion, and not only ſubſcribes to theirs, but that in the moſt public and ſolemn manner.

This ſubject long ago dropped by the reſpective diſputants, is revived by Elihu, and Job's reſtoration once more preſſed, upon a freſh conſideration indeed, and that was, of ſome very particular inſtances of perſons, to whom he would find himſelf nearly related, and therefore the more intereſted in their examples, who had experienced as extraordinary a revolution, full as much in their favor, and full as little to be expected as this. In the end what all theſe engage for, God makes good to him, he makes his appearance again in the cloſe of the poem, and ſurvives his diſtreſs an hundred and forty years.

And this to me, has ever appeared the beſt, I might add the only means of coming at the true import of this celebrated paſſage,

upon

upon which ſuch mighty ſtreſs has been laid by both criticks and divines; from language only, it is next to impoſſible to arrive at it, for in the firſt place, a critical ſkill in the hebrew tongue at this diſtance, is ſcarce to be hoped for, and if it were, the very particular ſtile and caſt of a compoſition abounding like this, with figure and allegory, inhances the difficulty; had the work been proſe, it had been hard, to ſay no more of it, to aſcertain the meaning of the words, but as it is poetry, and the work its-ſelf a work of imagination, it would call for ſome very different talents, than thoſe of the grammarian or the critick either, to expound them.

But when we go back for the true materials, to the argument of the book its-ſelf, and ſee what the point is, that is working through the whole intrigue of the poem, when we obſerve that ſingle point uniformly and conſiſtently labored, from the beginning to the end of it; doubted, diſputed, affirmed and denied, juſt as the nature of the work or the exigency of things required; recommended by one party, rejected by the other; ſtill preſſed with additional force, and urged upon different motives; yielded to at length by perſuaſion, and embraced from conviction; if the temporal reſtoration of Job turn out to be this very point, then of conſequence, the temporal reſtoration of Job, bids faireſt for being at the bottom of this or any other text, that ſpeaks at all of any reſtoration.

What has led the learned advocates for the contrary opinion, into their inferring the doctrine of the general reſurrection from this text in particular, was, that in many paſſages of this book, Job manifeſtly ſpeaks of his body in ſuch deſponding terms, as ſhould ſeem to preclude all poſſibility of its ſurviving the wretched condition, in which he deſcribes it, and that therefore a temporal reſtoration muſt be impertinent to one, who neither conceived himſelf capable of it, nor entertained a ſingle wiſh about it, whereas a reſurrection to another and a better life they conceive, would anſwer all his difficulties and reſolve all his doubts, and place him in a ſituation, where *pain and ſorrow would be no mere.*

Now not to mention, that a declaration ſo very explicite as this, of the reſurrection, is vaſtly diſproportionate to any age [a], wherein

[a] How great lengths the Rabbins found themſelves obliged to run, in extracting even the doctrine of a future ſtate from the Pentateuch, may be ſeen in Sepher Coſri, which alledges that text, *Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my latter end be like his*, Numb. xiii. 10. for a proof that it was believed in antient times, for ſays he, there is a certain prayer of one that propheſied by the holy Ghoſt, who deſired that he might die the death of the righteous. Patr. Com. in loc.

the

the loweſt date of this book can poſſibly be fixed, nor yet that the Jews never thought in any of their expoſitions of any ſuch doctrine, moſt certain it is, that there is no one point ſo ſtrenuouſly denied, or treated with ſuch neglect all along by Job, as that of a future exiſtence [u], which he diſclaims all intereſt in or concern about, that the ſole queſtion relative to any thing of this kind, between him and his three friends, was the likelihood of a body like his, being ever reſtored again to its priſtine ſtate, or emaciated as it was, cloathed again with all its former fleſh. And here indeed lies the whole ſecret, the devil's permiſſion was to touch him *in his bone and in his fleſh*, and he had done it moſt effectually, for *his bone* he tells us, *cleaved unto his fleſh*, and ſo ſevere had been his diſcipline, that *he had eſcaped only with the ſkin of his teeth*. In ſhort from a hale healthful habit of body, he was now dwindled into a living ſkeleton, ſtript of all his fleſh, and waſted down to the very bone, loathſom to himſelf and a diſmal ſpectacle to others, like what the meſſenger in Euripides, pronounces of Oreſtes,

Πικρον θεαμα κ) προσοψις ἀθλια.

and he conceived it as impoſſible for God, to reſtore him to his former health and vigor, as to bring a clean thing out of an unclean.

And full as little conſiſtent is any ſuch appeal, with the conduct of the debate, as it is with the machinery of the poem; for had Job's friends been in poſſeſſion of ſo valuable a ſecret, as the doctrine of the reſurrection, the whole difficulty which ſo much perplexed him and them too, had been reſolved in a moment: for in ſhort, it had only been ſaying, that Job's afflictions were but of a temporary duration, or confined at moſt, to this life, and that he would have his full proportion of rewards in another, and the matter in diſpute had been fairly at an end; there had been no ſort of occaſion to accuſe him of being more blameable than others, all they needed to do was to have comforted him with the hopes of another life; God himſelf undoubtedly would have declared, that in this life, he neither rewards nor puniſhes men exactly according to their deſerts, but reſerves that for its proper province, for the life which is to come; this would have been the only ſolution of the difficulty, and if God make not this declaration, the reaſon is, it was not his pleaſure as yet, to make any clear revelation of this doctrine [w].

[u] Chap. vii. 9. 21. Ch. x. 21. Ch. xvi. 22. Ch. xiv. 7. & paſſim. [w] Gaſp. Sanct. in loc.

For

For Job then to appeal to the general reſurrection in his caſe, could neither be conſiſtent with the deſign of the poem, for here again, he was to make his appearance once more upon the ſtage; nor was it by any means a remedy equal to his diſorder; a *redeemer*, that one day or other would *ſtand upon the earth*, and after this *ſkin* of his was thus conſumed, would reſtore to him *his fleſh*, was the only redeemer he could long for, at leaſt the only one that his caſe demanded, but this he all along conceived to be impoſſible, and therefore deſpaired of, till by arguments unanſwerable and authority irreſiſtible, he grew to feel the truth and comfort of it, and then and not till then, he makes this ſolemn declaration of both his hope and belief in him [w].

Tell a man in the laſt ſtage of a lingering conſumption, that at the general reſurrection of the dead, he ſhall once again appear in all his former bloom and proportion, you will give comfort to his ſoul, but he muſt have a very ſingular affection indeed for the body, if that ſingle conſideration make all his comfort; but tell him that under proper regimen, and with proper applications of medicine, he may yet recover, how deſperate ſoever his diſorder; that how unpromiſing ſoever ſome ſymptoms are, yet there are others which give room for hope; or at the worſt, that it may pleaſe God in his infinite mercy and power, to reſtore him to his former health and vigor, and to prolong his days upon earth; produce him inſtances within his own memory, or perhaps in the circle of his own acquaintance or family, of perſons recovered in the ſelf-ſame circumſtances, you then addreſs the patient like a friend, as well as a phyſician, and though his feelings may poſſibly ſuſpend his faith, yet his hopes will be inflamed, in proportion to the opinion he entertains of you.

When Hezekiah in that deſperate ſickneſs of his, a ſickneſs which if we keep but ſight of, we ſhall be at no loſs for Job's, had given up all thoughts of recovery, and had prepared himſelf to receive

[w] In ſo miſerable a caſe as this, what remained for him but to appeal to God himſelf? not at the general reſurrection, which was unknown I ſuppoſe, before the publication of the goſpel, but at the concluſion of the debate, when the poet intended the deity to appear, and ſilence all their reaſonings, and for which the reader was in ſome meaſure to be prepared before hand. In this ſenſe Job might with great propriety ſay, I know that my deliverer (out of theſe calamities) is the living (God) and that at the latter end (of this debate) he will ſtand (as we find he doth) upon the duſt (of the earth) nay that after this ſkin of mine is conſumed away, yet in my fleſh (which I ſhall recover again) ſhall I ſee God, &c. Coſtard's Obſervations on the book of Job. p. 40.

the

the finiſhing ſtroke of death, with all that compoſure and reſignation, which became a good man, that had received ſuch friendly warning of it, the prophet repeats his viſit to him, not to inform him, that his body was to make its appearance again in another world, but that it ſhould be healed again in this, not to reveal to him the glories of a future ſtate, but to aſſure him of a longer continuance in the preſent one; *Behold* ſays he, *I will add to thy days fifteen years*, and that the addition of thoſe years might be a bleſſing, and not a burden to him, which in the condition he then laid in, it muſt have been, he preſcribes a remedy that proved effectual in his diſorder, and *his fleſh returned again freſher than a child's*, a leading circumſtance this, to the ſeat of his diſorder, as well as to the part which he and Job too were ſolicitous for the recovery of.

Worſe than Hezekiah was Job could not be, he laid ill of a pining ſickneſs, attended with all the diſcouraging ſymptoms of loſs of fleſh and drooping ſpirits, deſponding and afflicted even unto death, there was as little likelihood of the recovery of the one as of the other, and if ever it did take place it would probably be owing to the ſame means, becauſe in truth it was the ſame diſtemper, both of them were manifeſtly beyond the reach of human ſkill, and all the natural powers of medicine, and no wonder therefore that both of them looked upon it next to a natural impoſſibility, that they ſhould ever recover, and ſpoke of it in terms of abſolute deſpair, and in ſuch language, as placed any ſuch recovery in the ſame light, as the cloathing of dead bones with fleſh and animating them again with new life.

It is a language familiar to the prophets, when they ſpeak of the temporal diſtreſſes and deliverances of God's people: the one they repreſent under the idea of death, and the other of a reſurrection; thus it is, that Iſaiah preſents the captive Jew with a proſpect of his reſtoration; *thy dead men ſhall live, together with my dead body ſhall they ariſe: awake and ſing thou that lieſt in the duſt: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth ſhall caſt out the dead*[a]: ſo again, full to our point the prophet Ezekiel, in the very days of the Jews captivity, when they had experienced the laſt ſad turn of all their affairs in the diſſolution of their ſtate and church, is carried *by the ſpirit into a valley full of bones, and it cauſed him to paſs by them round about, and behold they were very many in the open valley, and lo they*

[a] Ch. xxvi. 19.

were very dry; and he ſaid unto him can theſe bones live? and he anſwered, O Lord God thou knoweſt. Again the ſpirit ſaid, propheſy unto theſe bones, and ſay unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord, thus ſaith the Lord God unto theſe dry bones, behold I will cauſe breath to enter into you and ye ſhall live, and I will lay ſinews upon you, and will bring fleſh upon you, and cover you with ſkin, and put breath in you, and ye ſhall live, and ye ſhall know that I am the Lord. —ſo he propheſied and the breath came into them, and they ſtood upon their feet, an exceeding great army[a].

Here, as an eminent divine remarks upon the words, "we have in the prophetic way, an aſſurance given to the Jews, that though their polity was now diſſolved, and their tribes diſperſed, yet the time was coming, when the providence of God would in a wonderful manner, work out their deliverance and return: reunite the ſeveral parts of their ſhattered frame, and make that people live together once again, under their own laws, and in their own country[b]." And elſewhere, "the words carry with them this conſideration, that God doth ſometimes interpoſe in behalf of loſt ſtates and kingdoms, and delights to manifeſt his power and providence in retrieving them from ruin, whom they are as incapable of reſtitution by all human means, as dead and dry bones are of recovering their vital juices, and being compacted again into a living body[c]."

Now if the doctrine of the general reſurrection, was to be concluded from every paſſage in the old teſtament, where life and death, dying and riſing again are put in contraſt, no paſſage would bid ſo fair for ſuch a concluſion, as that before us, which is more plain, more expreſs, more particular in every reſpect, than that in Job, and yet nothing leſs it ſeems, was its true import, for it meant only to convey to the prophet, that the future reſtoration of the Jews in God's good time was none ſo impoſſible a thing, as might have been conceived, nor ſo improbable, but that one day it would come to paſs; *then* ſaid he, *Son of man, theſe bones are the whole houſe of Iſrael, behold they ſay our bones are dried up* (the very language of Job) *and our hope is loſt, and we are cut off for our parts. Therefore propheſy and ſay unto them, thus ſaith the Lord God, behold O my people I will open your graves, and cauſe you to come out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Iſrael, and ye ſhall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, my people, and brought you of*

[a] Ezek. Ch. xxxvii. [b] Atterbury's Sermons. Vol. I. p. 245. [c] Ibid. p. 247.

your

your graves, and he ſhall put my ſpirit in you, and ye ſhall live, and I ſhall place you in your own land.

The truth is, communities a well as individuals, have their political life and death, their chronical and critical diſorders; national impiety and corruption are as much the diſtemper of a nation, and are as certain indications of its tendency to diſſolution, as feveriſh or conſumptive habits are in private perſons: in the jewiſh republick, this language was particularly intelligible, where in moſt caſes, as we have before explained more at large, the diſobedience of that people was puniſhed with ſome bodily and epidemic affliction; not only the plague, peſtilence and famine, thoſe great national viſitations, but the boil and the botch, the emerods, the ſcab and the itch, and blindneſs and madneſs were threatned by their great law-giver to particular inſtances of breach of duty, theſe were looked upon in their ſeveral degrees, as ſo many ſtages of a lingering conſumption in that people, the laſt and moſt deſperate of which was their captivity, or utter diſſolution of their conſtitution both in church and ſtate.

This was what they had long been warned of, and what they now felt to their coſt as well as ſhame: they conſidered therefore their captivity, as they might well do, to be their death, and the land of Babylon their grave, wherein all the honor and majeſty, the wealth and credit of that great and antient nation, was now buried, and ſeemed to all human foreſight, to be as little capable of being retrieved again, as life and breath could be to a body long dead and corrupted in the grave.

Date only the lxxxviii[th] pſalm * ſomewhere about this period, and you will ſee all this kind of imagery in its full perfection; the pſalmiſt is there bewailing the low condition, to which he had been reduced by God, ſo low, that he conſidered himſelf as inhabiting the tombs of the dead, rather than the abodes of the living, and converſing with the departed ſpirits of men long dead; " I am count-
" ed as one of them that go down to the pit, and I have been even
" as a man that hath no ſtrength: free among the dead, like unto
" them that are wounded and lie in the grave, who are out of re-

* This pſalm bears for its title, a ſong or pſalm for the ſons of *Korah*, to the chief muſician upon *Mahaloth Leannoth*. Maſchil of *Acman* the Ezrahite, now who this *Acman* was is uncertain; not the famous ſinger in David's time, but of the poſterity of thoſe ſons of *Zerah* mentioned, 1 Chron. ii. 6. but in what time they lived, cannot certainly be determined. It is probable when Jeconiah, otherwiſe called Jehoaichin, and afterwards Zedekiah were taken, and carried captive to Babylon, together with abundance of the nobility and the principal artizans and commanders. Patrick. Argument to Pſ. lxxxviii.

" membrance, and cut away from thy hand: thou haſt laid me in " the loweſt pit, in a place of darkneſs and in the deep."

Here he pauſes a while, and plunged in all the doubt and diſbelief of any poſſibility of a recovery from ſuch a deſperate ſituation, common to all the Jews at this period, he begins expoſtulating with God upon the ſubject, and telling him, " Lord I have called daily " upon thee, I have ſtretched forth my hands unto thee," but for what end or to what purpoſe? for " doſt thou ſhew wonders among " the dead, or ſhall the dead riſe up again and praiſe thee?" Were they the proper objects of his mercy who had brought themſelves into ſo ruinous a condition by their own obſtinacy, or was their captivity the proper ſcene, for God to exert his forgiveneſs in? " Shall thy loving kindneſs be ſhewed in the grave, or thy faith- " fulneſs in deſtruction? ſhall thy wondrous works be known in " the dark, or thy righteouſneſs in the land where all things are " forgotten?" No, it was now too late to expect any ſuch or indeed any favor at all, from God's hand, all he had to do was to throw himſelf at God's feet, to deprecate his vengeance, and to implore his pardon. This is ſo exactly the deſponding language of Job, that the reader will conclude I conceive, of courſe, that this pſalm muſt relate to the ſame ſubject, and bear date where the learned prelate fixes it, in ſome year or other of the Babyloniſh captivity.

SECT.

SECT. III.

HERE therefore, I might have fairly ventured to reſt the proof of this point with the attentive reader, but juſt as I had finiſhed this, there appeared freſh from the preſs, a piece entitled *Job's expectation of a reſurrection conſidered*; a title, too nearly related to the affair in hand, not to raiſe an immediate curioſity, to ſee what the author had to offer on ſo intereſting a ſubject; upon peruſing it I confeſs, I found no reaſon to alter the opinion I had formed of this poem, nor yet to add any ſupplemental proofs of the reſtoration of Job, being not the principal only, but the ſole ſubject of it; and yet the author's point, I muſt tell the reader, is to ſhew that it neither was, nor could be ſo.

That it was not ſo, he argues, becauſe "the patriarch, at the time "he makes that famous declaration of his," *I know that my redeemer liveth*, "had in ſo many words, renounced all hope of "any temporal felicity, or of ſeeing any future re-eſtabliſhment of "his fortunes; that he piouſly ſubmitted at firſt to the diſpenſations "of providence, nor ever after flattered himſelf with a glorious re-"verſe of fortune; that his grief deſcribed in livelieſt colors, they "ſufficiently ſhew, how little were his hopes of temporal great-"neſs; that human nature is buoyed up by expectation, nor great-"ly ſinks, but when it is deprived of hope; that his expreſſions "are ſuitable to his grief, and his words full of deſpair; that from "the firſt guſt of his paſſion to his declaration of hope in his re-"deemer, and afterwards to the cloſe of his warm diſpute with his "friends, he ſometimes breathes forth his wiſhes for death, and "frequently declares his no-expectations of life. And, upon the "whole, that there are no paſſages in the work that weaken theſe "proofs, or which may induce us to think that Job fluctuated be-"tween hope and deſpair."[a]

Now abating the aſſertion that I Job piouſly ſubmitted at firſt to the diſpenſations of providence, which holds only true of him in the prologue, but the reverſe of which is true in the very firſt opening of the *drama*, I ſee no reaſon to diſpute with the learned au-

[a] Three ſermons on Job xix. 25. 26. Oxford. 1747. By Rich. Brown, B. D.

thor, the general account he gives of Job's reaſoning and behaviour under all his trials, previous to this famous declaration; for that before this, he never flattered himſelf with any ſuch reverſe of his fortunes, or fluctuated at all between hope and fear, nay that he diſcarded all hope, and diſavowed all inclination to ſee any ſuch revolution, is the very thing we have been all along contending. All thus far is therefore right, and had this been the whole of the tranſaction, had not his temporal reſtoration been either the point, his friends were laboring to convince him of the truth of, nor yet the point, to which he was at laſt to be brought; had he ſtopt ſhort with thoſe expreſſions of unbelief and deſpair, and not proceeded to a declaration ſo explicit of a reſtoration, in ſome ſenſe or other, the learned author's concluſion had been as good as his premiſes, that at the time of his ſpeaking thoſe words, he had no hopes of a temporal reſtoration.

But if after ſuch repeated profeſſions of his unbelief in this particulars, and his friends repeated arguments, to preſs upon him the truth and importance of this doctrine, he appear all at once to alter his tone, and to declare for a reſtoration, in ſome ſenſe or other: a temporal reſtoration bids as fair at leaſt, to be that which he hoped for, as any other, fairer if it be that very one, which had been the ſubject throughout the whole of the diſpute, and turn out at laſt to be the very reſtoration, which takes place in the concluſion, and had been concerting throughout the whole intrigue of the poem.

How far therefore he might reaſon conſiſtently with himſelf, is one thing, and how far he was to act conſiſtently with the buſineſs of the *drama*, into which he was introduced as a principal character, is another; he might reaſon and debate, he might doubt and deny, for all this was but neceſſary to keep up the converſation and to protract the diſpute; ſtill this hindered not, why he might not at length be brought to ſee the truth of what he had been ſo long and ſo perverſely arguing againſt, nor was it any reproach either to his philoſophy or his ingenuity, that either better arguments than he had brought, or better authority than he could pretend to, had at laſt convinced him of a truth, which he had hitherto been proof againſt.

If that truth after all, was really the poſition of a future ſtate and of a reſurrection, his appeal to a reſurrection and a future ſtate was certainly right and pertinent; but if this was not the caſe, and it were only a temporal reſtoration, which they aſſerted and he denied, his refuge to a future ſtate and a reſurrection, which they never once touch upon and he more than once contradicts, will be liable to all

the objection, which the learned author has been pleaſed to faſten upon the contrary opinion, that " it ſeemingly deſerves the cenſure " of being pompous and abſurd [a];" is introduced in all that ſolemnity, to clear up a difficulty that had never been ſtarted, to take Job's opinion upon a queſtion, that had never been aſked him, and to eſtabliſh a doctrine, which has no connection with either the deſign, or the execution, with either the beginning, conduct or concluſion of the *drama*.

And yet it ſeems, that the ſingle circumſtance of this declaration of Job's, being prefaced with ſo much ſolemnity, is of weight enough to determine the ſenſe of it to a reſurrection; for, " the " preface with which this text is introduced, is very remarkable; " it diſcovers an emphaſis and life, that ſpeak ſollicitude and anxiety; " an anxious earneſtneſs to perpetuate the memory of what he " was about to utter;" and thus far he is right; but he proceeds, " there is a beauty and propriety in it, if it relates to man's reſur- " rection, and the future glories of another everlaſting kingdom: " but if it has a view only to Job's reſtoration, the temporal de- " liverance of a private man, tho' great and virtuous, it ſeemingly " deſerves the cenſure of being pompous and abſurd; there was " no occaſion for his words being written with an iron pen, or " graven on the rock to remain for ever, or even to be a witneſs " of his hope, if he looked no farther than to that change of his " condition, which was ſoon to come, and which when come, " would of its-ſelf refute the calumnies of his friends [b]."

What beauty there might be in the words thus prefaced, relating to man's reſurrection I cannot ſay, but propriety I am perſuaded, in the place they ſtand, there is none; the reſtoration of a private man to health and proſperity, with all the ſymptoms of death upon him, and in all the ruinous circumſtances that could be conceived, was an event worthy of all the ſolemnity, with which this text is introduced, and deſerved being recorded in eternal characters, as a monument of God's mercy, and as a teſtimony of Job's faith; but in fact, the whole of this pomp and preface, in the language of ſcripture, implies no more than that a truth ſo prefaced is of great importance, ſuch as deſerves to be recorded for the nature or for the conſequences of it [c], but not ſuch therefore as muſt neceſſarily infer

[a] P. 20. [b] Ibid. [c] Pſ. lvi. 8. Jer. xxii. 30. Dan. x. 21. Hab. ii. 2. Mal. iii. 16.

ſome

ſome connection with the future glories of another ſtate, or ſuch as can have no relation to the concerns of this.

The prophet Iſaiah has introduced a declaration of God's making to him, with much the ſame ſort of preface; *Now go, write it before them on a table, and note it in a book*[d], *that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever*; and what was all this! that this is "a rebellious people, lying children, children that will "not hear the law of the Lord;" this, according to our author's way of reaſoning, was an obſervation that needed not all this ſolemnity of introduction, the corrupt ſtate of that people, of whom it was ſpoken, was too viſible, to require ſo pompous a teſtimony to be born to it, and their puniſhment, was that the burden of it, too certain to need ſo very formal and magnificent a denunciation. Was their reſtoration at ſome time or other, to be declared with the ſame ſolemnity, this I ſuppoſe, would look ſomewhat too pompous and abſurd, the reſtoration of a private people, how great ſoever, was not of conſequence enough for ſo ſolemn an appeal as this, that reſtoration of courſe would come when it would come, and when come, would refute the calumnies of all both friends and enemies.

But it muſt be confeſſed, our author has gone further, and not content with arguing, that a temporal reſtoration was not in fact the thing, that Job either wiſhed or contended for, has puſhed his advantage and labored to prove, that neither was it, what he could poſſibly either hope or promiſe himſelf. "In this truth, ſays he, "we ſhall be the more confirmed, if we conſider farther, that Job "could have no foreknowledge of his reſtoration to a flouriſhing "condition. 'Tis true indeed he was reſtored, (*that I think is no "ſmall conceſſion*) for God meant not to ruin even the temporal "intereſts of his ſervant, but his reſtoration, it is plain, was ſudden "and unhoped for; Job could not know that he ſhould be reſtored "to a ſtate of proſperity from any obſervation or experience of the "diſpenſations of God's ordinary providence, which, he elſewhere "contends, did not conſtantly reward virtue in this life: and Satan "had cut off his temporal views to all appearance in his ruin. And "he could not know that he ſhould be reſtored by God's extra-"ordinary providence; God does not uſually give previous aſſu-"rances of temporal happineſs, and had providence revealed to "him his future reſtoration to ſuch happineſs, his integrity would

[d] Ch. xxx. 8.

"not

" not have been ſo greatly remarkable, would not have ſo eminent-
" ly diſtinguiſhed him to be, what God had pronounced upon
" him, a perfect and upright man [e]."

Where it is, that God pronounces ſo much of him, the learned author had done well to inform us; not I am perſuaded, before he made that ſolemn declaration of his, nor before he had confeſſed himſelf to be neither the perfect nor the upright man, he repreſents him; ſo that his integrity is out of the queſtion; but if it were not, ſurely he was neither the leſs perfect nor the leſs upright a man, for believing he might one day emerge out of all his miſery, provided only he was furniſhed with ſufficient warrant for ſuch a belief; if his virtue was to ſuffer in the opinion of mankind, upon this account, and he was liable to be conſidered, as acting upon motives of intereſt and not of duty, all the virtue in the world muſt ſuffer upon the ſame footing, for it matters not, whether the intereſt be of a finite or infinite nature, the motive is ſtill the ſame, and ſo long as he proceeds upon it, as the ſole principle of action, it comes to juſt the ſame thing, whether you ſuppoſe him influenced by the hopes of a temporal or an eternal intereſt; for it is the reſpect to the recompence of the reward, that takes off it ſeems, all the grace and merit of his actions, and " if he was acquainted
" with his reſtoration, whilſt he was under his afflictions, he could
" not be ſaid to ſerve God for nought [f]."

Now were the buſineſs of this poem merely to eſtabliſh the perſonal integrity of Job, or to confute that inſinuation of the devil's, that it was not for nought that he ſerved God, there might be ſome meaning and force too in this objection, but unfortunately for all ſuch reaſonings, this is ſo far from being true, that the very reverſe of it is the caſe; for it was to expoſe his guilt, that his innocence was at firſt impeached, and it was to draw him to repentance, that his guilt was to be expoſed; before he could with any propriety, be reſtored again, he muſt firſt be brought to ſubmiſſion; and before he could be brought to ſubmiſſion, he muſt firſt be convicted of a breach of duty; but all this we ſee, ſuppoſes him guilty and not innocent.

For providence then to reveal to him ſuch a reſtoration, whilſt under affliction, as a motive to repentance, carries in the idea of it, nothing either ſo ſtrange or ſo inconſiderable, as the learned author would inſinuate, the poſſibility of ſuch a revelation cannot well be

[e] P. 32. [f] P. 33.

doubted, and the expediency of it at that ſeaſon, ſeems of all others the greateſt, and therefore though it ſhould be granted him, that in the common courſe of reaſoning, Job could not poſſibly " come at any fore-knowledge of his reſtoration to a flouriſhing condition, from any obſervations or experience of God's ordinary providence," yet it will not follow by any kind of logic, from thence, " that he might not be reſtored by God's extraordinary providence;" for this in truth, was the very caſe with him, the very foundation of all his reaſonings upon this ſubject was the great improbability of any ſuch reſtoration, as his friends would needs flatter him with, for that there was nothing either in the courſe and conſtitution of nature, or in the ſettled laws and conduct of God's providence, to juſtify ſuch an expectation.

But theſe were not the principles they went upon, they ſet out at the very firſt with acquainting him that they came with ſomething more than mere human authority, and in order to give the greater weight to their arguments, they introduce them under the ſanction of a divine revelation. *Now a thing*, ſays Eliphaz, *was ſecretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof: in thoughts from the viſions of the night, when deep ſleep falleth on men, fear came upon me and trembling which made all my bones for to ſhake; then a ſpirit paſſed before my face, the hair of my fleſh ſtood up; it ſtood ſtill, but I could not diſcern the form thereof: an image was before mine eyes, there was ſilence, and I heard a voice* [g].

With all this ſolemnity then of introducing their arguments, and with all the ſteadineſs they ſhewed, in perſevering in this one, that one day or other he ſhould be reſtored again, in ſpite of all the deſpondency he expreſſed, Job could not but be prepared for ſo extraordinary an event, nor was it poſſible that his reſtoration at laſt, ſhould be " either ſudden or unhoped for," or as the learned author has hinted, " not that which he expected at the latter day;" it muſt be confeſſed, " God does not *uſually* give previous aſſurances of temporal happineſs to his creatures," this is undeniable, but that in ſome extraordinary caſes, he may vouchſafe to impart to them ſome extraordinary light, to lead them through difficulties, or to ſupport them under the preſſure of afflictions, is one of the moſt comfortable doctrines of religion, and ſtill the more comfortable, if at the ſame time, he preſent to their view, a poſſibility of their being one day recovered from them.

[g] Ch. iv. 12. compare Dan. x. 7.

If

If the caſe of the Jews in their captivity, which is full to the purpoſe, and ſhews in the ſtrongeſt light, the conduct of providence in imparting ſuch communications, upon extraordinary occaſions, be thought too complicated an one, take the ſimple caſe of Hezekiah, and this matter will appear in its true luſtre; the account we have of that extraordinary ſickneſs of his, is, that it was ſo great, that he had all the ſymptoms of immediate death upon him, and the prophet, that God ſent to him, far from flattering him at firſt with any hopes of recovery, warns him *to ſet his houſe in order, for that he ſhould die and not live*;" this no doubt, was a very alarming circumſtance, and baniſhed at once every thought, and every ſecret wiſh that he might have entertained of life; accordingly with all the reſignation and piety, which ſo extraordinary a warning muſt naturally beget in a good man's breaſt, we find him *turning his face to the wall*, and *praying to God* with all contrition; and what was the conſequence? " then came the word of the Lord to Iſaiah, ſaying, go and ſay to Hezekiah, thus ſaith the Lord the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have ſeen thy tears; behold I will add unto thy days fifteen years[h]."

Had he ſet all the philoſophy he was maſter of, at work in this juncture, all his philoſophy could not aſſure him, that a man at the brink of death, ſhould recover, all the philoſophy in the world could not have evinced to him, that he ſhould not only recover from the agonies of death, but ſurvive his ſickneſs fifteen years; there was plainly nothing " that he could gather either from the power of medicine, or from the ordinary diſpenſations of providence" to give the leaſt countenance for ſo vain an expectation, and yet upon the authority of a prophet, he reſumes his courage, makes the application of the medicine that had been preſcribed to him, a very innocent and ſimple one, and recovers.

I chooſe to inſtance in this caſe of Hezekiah's, not only becauſe I conceive it, ſimply conſidered, a full and direct anſwer to all that our author had objected, as to the ordinary or extraordinary providence of God being concerned in communicating ſuch a reſtoration: but as I conceived it likewiſe to be the very ground-work, upon which this whole poem had been planned, the reaſons of which have been already aſſigned. But I have a yet further uſe to make of this inſtance; the expreſſions of Hezekiah's grief upon this occaſion, and the ſtrong ſymptoms of deſpair that attended it, ſo ama-

[h] Iſ. xxxviii.

zinly reſemble the grief and the deſpair, that Job was under upon the like calamity, that I cannot help thinking, but that from hence ſome light may be come at towards explaining the celebrated paſſage in this poem, which has been ſuch matter of doubt and perplexity among all both chriſtian and jewiſh writers.

That the reader may ſee this matter in the beſt point of view, I take the liberty once more to bring together the correſpondent paſſages, as they lie in the two writers, from whence it will be eaſy to obſerve their exact ſimilitude, and to attend to the uſe I intend to make of the compariſon.

Hezekiah.

I ſaid in the cutting off of my days, I ſhall go to the gates of the grave, I am deprived of the reſidue of my years. I ſaid I ſhall not ſee the Lord in the land of the living, *I ſhall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world. Mine age is removed from me as a ſhepherd's tent: I have cut off like a weaver my life; he will cut me off with a pining ſickneſs, from day. Even till night thou wilt make an end of me; I reckoned that till morning like a lion ſo would he break all my bones, from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me. I ſhall go ſoftly in the bitterneſs of my ſoul all my years*[i].

Job.

CHAP. vii. *I am made to poſſeſs months of vanity, and weariſom nights are appointed me: when I lie down I ſay when ſhall I ariſe and the night be gone, and I am full of toſſing to and fro unto the dawning of the day. My fleſh is cloathed with worms, and with clods of duſt,* my ſkin is broken, *and become loathſom. My days are ſwifter than a weaver's ſhuttle, and are ſpent without hope. Oh remember that my life is wind, mine eye ſhall no more ſee good. The eye of him that hath ſeen me ſhall ſee me no more, thine eyes are upon me and I am not.*

Here we ſee, that Job and Hezekiah both, agree in having given up all thoughts of life, upon any other terms, but its being ſpent in miſery and deſpair, both agree that long it could not laſt, but that in a little time, they muſt of courſe take their leave of the world, and the world of them, that after that, they ſhould neither ſee man, nor man them any more. But obſerve, Hezekiah goes farther, and ſays, *I ſhall not ſee the Lord in the land of the living*;

[i] Iſ. xxxix.

this

this he bemoans, as one of the hardeſt and moſt afflicting circumſtances attending the ſudden diſſolution, he had been threatened with. What then could this mean? not ſurely the beatific viſion of God, for that was reſerved for another world, and it is *in the land of the living*, that he deſpaired of ſeeing God; not that he ſhould no longer have the opportunity of ſeeing him in his ſanctuary, *i. e.* of worſhipping him, or celebrating and praiſing his holy name, that were none ſo very afflicting a circumſtance to one, who could ſay at that trying ſeaſon, that he *had walked before the Lord in truth and with a perfect heart*[k], and might therefore flatter himſelf with hopes of a much more exalted fruition of God.

To *ſee God* therefore *in the land of the living*, muſt be the ſame thing as *to ſee men with the inhabitants of the world*, which indeed are both connected in the paſſage before us, *i. e.* to have free intercourſe and communication with God here upon earth, and from ſuch intercourſe to reap all the comforts and advantages that muſt neceſſarily attend it; that this muſt be the true and proper ſenſe of the words, is ſtill more probable, becauſe the word JAH, God, is that particular name, by which the ſcriptures generally ſpeak of him under the character of the *redeemer* and *deliverer* of his people, and where there is a particular emphaſis laid upon it, learned men are of opinion, that this muſt of courſe be the meaning of the word. Now here is a very particular ſtreſs indeed laid, for not content with expreſſing his deſpair of ever again ſeeing God, the word is repeated, and he ſays, I ſhall not ſee JAH, JAH, in the land of the living: a reduplication of the ſame kind with that in Iſ. xii. 5. where it is ſaid in JAH, JEHOVAH, *is everlaſting ſtrength*[l].

From this account of the matter, it ſhould ſeem that Hezekiah's deſpairing of ever again *ſeeing God in the land of the living*, imported only, that he deſpaired of ever ſeeing God, as his redeemer and deliverer from the grievous affliction and malady, he now labored under, of all that intercourſe continuing any longer, which had been ſo open and frequent between God and his people, and

[k] Iſ. xxxviii. 3.

[l] Solummodo nunc addo, obſervaſſe me vere, cum ad uſum hujus nominis JAH diligentius attenderem, nomen hoc ubique fere uſurpari, ubi Deus exhibetur ut ſalvator & liberator populi ſui. Sic uſu venit Exod. xv. 2. Iſ. xii. 2. Pſ. cxviii. 5, 6, 14, 17. Vitringa in Iſ. xxvi. 5.

Incidit autem emphaſis ſententiæ in vocem JAH quæ proprie notat, Deum *liberatorum populi ſui* ex anguſtiis & afflictione. *Deum ſalutis*, gratiam ſuam patefacientem in liberando & vindicando populo ſuo. Vitr. in loc.

had

had ſhewn its-ſelf ſo ſignally, in the many deliverances of their kings; and to this idea of *ſeeing God*, exactly anſwers what the pſalmiſt, probably upon the ſelf-ſame ſubject with that of the book of Job, confeſſes, *I ſhould verily have fainted, but that I believed verily to ſee the goodneſs of the Lord* in the land of the living[m], where no one ever doubted but it was a temporal deliverance, he had ſo long ſupported himſelf with the hopes of.

What Hezekiah then deſpaired of ſeeing, yet lived to ſee, *God in the land of the living*, it is probable Job too after all his deſpair, might at laſt hope to ſee, how unpromiſing ſoever was the proſpect. It had been his wiſh all along, and his demand too, irreverent as it was, to *ſee* God, *to ſpeak to the Almighty, and to reaſon with God*, upon the ſubject of his treatment of him, and in this at the long run, he was to be indulged; in the mean time, to relieve the tedious interval, Elihu preſents himſelf, as he expreſly prefaces his diſcourſe, *to his wiſh and in God's ſtead*, and no ſooner does he quit the ſtage, than God enters upon it, and Job declares himſelf ſatisfied at the ſight, he had been ſo long and ſo anxiouſly wiſhing for; *I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye ſeeth thee*; where each ſenſe is expreſſed by its proper organ, and no futurity or reſurrection inſinuated.

And this conſidered, the management of the *drama* concurs with the management of the argument, in fixing the meaning of that celebrated text under conſideration; Job aſſures both himſelf and his friends, in the moſt ſolemn manner, that *though after his ſkin worms deſtroy his body*, yet he was perſuaded at length in *his fleſh, he ſhould ſee God, whom he ſhould ſee for himſelf, and his* eyes ſhould behold *and not another*; if the whole compaſs of language could have furniſhed words of more preciſe meaning, I am much miſtaken; his confidence was that he ſhould, notwithing the black cloud, which now hung over him, at the long run, *ſee God*, ſee him propitious to him, and experience the bleſſings of a kinder providence[n]; that he ſhould not only ſee him, but ſee him too *in the fleſh*, in that very ſyſtem of fleſh and blood reſtored, which they once beheld him in; that it was *with his eyes*, the proper organs of ſight, that he ſhould ſee him, and that it ſhould be *God himſelf*, and not any *other* deliverer that he ſhould behold[o].

[m] Pſal. xxviii. 13. [n] Quem ego videbo meum, non amplius mihi adverſarium, fulminaque jaculantem, ſed propitium, ſed partibus a meis ſtantem, ſed ſuâ me gratiâ quin & gloriâ colluſtrantem. Grey in locum.

[o] Non alius oculus, aliud corpus, alia caro, ſed hi ipſi oculi, hoc ipſum corpus, hæc caro. Fr. Spanh. Hiſt. Job. p. 422.

Between

Between this explicit declaration of Job's, and that deſponding ſuggeſtion of Hezekiah's, I own I ſee no other difference, than that the one is in hopes of ſeeing ELOAH, for by that name Job calls God, and the other deſpairs of ſeeing JAH, for that is his name in Iſaiah; but this is a difficulty, which admits of a very eaſy anſwer, if we conſider only the ſcrupulous regard paid by the Jews to the word JEHOVAH, at and after the time of the captivity; for it was religion with them not to uſe it, and they ſubſtituted in its place ELOAH, and ADONAI; a circumſtance which ſhould ſeem to give great countenance to the opinion, which fixes the date of this performance at or after that very time.

Yet it muſt not be diſſembled, that our author has interpoſed an objection of ſome ſeeming weight, againſt any ſolution of this difficulty, drawn from principles ſo obvious as thoſe we have gone upon. He contends therefore that the phraſe of *ſeeing God* implies only *ſimple ſight*, or ſeeing God, "either in viſion, or under "ſome ſenſible appearance; that in the firſt ſenſe, we are to under-"ſtand that of the prophet, I *ſaw the Lord* ſitting on his throne [p]; "and in the laſt Moſes's account of the nobles of Iſrael *ſeeing God* [q]. "That in neither of theſe places, the ſimple phraſe, *ſeeing God* can "ſignify, and he cannot find any place where it does ſignify, ſeeing "the Almighty propitious: nay more, that there is no paſſage in "the whole hebrew code, in which any one is ſaid to *ſee God*, or "ſpeaks of ſeeing God, ſimply and abſolutely, and with the word "HAZAH, uſed by Job, which can be interpreted in any ſenſe, but "that in which the nobles of Iſrael are ſaid to ſee God [r]."

Though I agree with our author in one of his poſitions, that the ſimple phraſe of *ſeeing God*, in the two inſtances he has referred to, cannot ſignify *the ſeeing of God propitious*, which I ſuppoſe, no man was ever ſo little acquainted with either ſenſe or language, as to inſinuate; yet he will pardon me, if I take the liberty to diſpute with him, the latter part of his aſſertion, that the whole hebrew code affords no one inſtance, where the *ſeeing of God* admits of any other ſenſe than the ſeeing him, under ſome ſenſible appearance; for it may fairly be queſtioned, whether in the very caſe he puts, Moſes and the elders of Iſrael could be ſaid to *ſee God*, under any ſenſible appearance, if by that be meant any ſenſible ſimilitude of God, and if not, how could it be termed *ſimple ſight* or *ſimple viſion*? But be

[p] 1 Kings. xxii. 19. [q] Exod. xxiv. 9. [r] p. 37.

that

that as it will, I am perſuaded, what has been already offered upon this ſubject, with regard to Hezekiah's apprehenſions, that he ſhould not *ſee the Lord* in the land of the living, is a ſtubborn contradiction to this aſſertion; he deſpaired we find of ſeeing him, not in ſome future ſtate, but in *the land of the living*; not under any ſenſible appearance, that he had no right to expect, and could not therefore have any hopes or fears about it, but under the notion of a propitious and merciful God, of a redeemer and a deliverer.

There is another paſſage, and that too in the very book of Job, which unfortunately for our author, muſt bear the ſame ſenſe, and I am perſuaded indeed, alludes to the ſame thing, and that is, where Elihu ſpeaking of God's calling men to repentance, either by viſions or by his prophets, or by the ordinary means of prayer, ſays, *he ſhall pray to God, and he will be favorable unto him, and and he ſhall* SEE HIS FACE *with joy* [g]; now would any man contend, that Elihu meant by *ſeeing God's face*, to inſinuate any ſenſible or perſonal appearance of God, in conſequence of the prayers of any perſon, how penitent and ſincere ſoever? No, there is no ſeparating in this place what Elihu has put together, *God's being favorable to man*, and *man's ſeeing God's face*, the one is much the beſt comment upon the other, and the pſalmiſt's upon them both, when he ſaith, *I believed verily to ſee the goodneſs of the Lord, in the land of the living* [h].

Indeed the word HAZAH, is not uſed in either of theſe paſſages, which perhaps is our author's refuge, when he ſo cautiouſly inſerts that ſaving, clauſe of *ſeeing* God, with the verb HAZAH uſed in Job; from which reſtriction one would be tempted to conclude, that there was ſome peculiar niceity in this word, ſomething that muſt determine the author's meaning with great preciſion, and yet I will venture to ſay, there is nothing of this kind at all, either in the word its-ſelf, or in the particular circumſtances of the application of it; that it neither ſignifies, nor is made to ſignify, any thing different from the common idea of *ſeeing*.

Let it be obſerved then, that even in this very text, the word HAZAH, is not the only word the author makes uſe of, for *ſeeing* God, that expreſſion is repeated and properly, thrice in our tranſlation, but when Job comes to declare, that his eyes ſhould *ſee* God, then the verb RAAH, which is the true primitive original root

[g] Chap. xxxiii. 26.

[h] Pſ. xxvii. 13.

throughout the whole hebrew code, or one at leaſt of them, denoting *ſimple ſight or viſion*, is his expreſſion; and this again is the very caſe with the parallel paſſage he has quoted in Exodus, where Moſes and the elders of Iſrael *ſaw* God[t]; at verſe 10th, the ſacred writer uſes the verb RAAH, and at verſe the 11th, HAZAH, both of which are tranſlated *ſee*, and are referred to the ſame object. So again Job, ſpeaking of God, *On the left hand I cannot*, HAZAH, behold *him, on the right hand he hideth himſelf and I cannot*, RAAH, ſee *him*[u]; if there be any difference between the ideas, which theſe two words import, it muſt be ſome ſuch an one, as the tranſlators have hit upon, in the laſt inſtance, between *ſeeing* and *beholding*, for my part, I can find no other.

The truth is; here are two words, which mean one and the ſame thing, convey one and the ſame idea, and are indifferently uſed, one for the other; nor is this peculiar to the ſacred language, it is the caſe with all languages, and ever will be. It were eaſy to produce a thouſand proofs of this obſervation, but I ſhall treſpaſs upon the reader with only one.

It is in the VI[th] book of Virgil, where Anchiſes, after ſhewing to Eneas, the ſhades of all the illuſtrious heroes of antient Rome, points out to him the Deciuſes, the Brutuſes, and then

> *ſævumque ſecuri*
> Aſpice *Torquatum, & referentem ſigna Camillum,*
> *Illæ autem paribus quas fulgere* cernis *in armis,*
> *Concordes animæ*[w].

Grammarians and Lexicographers it is true, have been at great pains to eſtabliſh the true diſtinction, between the two verbs, *cerno* and *aſpicio*[x], and the learned world may wait the deciſion of ſo doughty a controverſy, without any loſs or inconvenience; in the mean while, no one I am convinced, who reads thoſe lines, will be of opinion, that Eneas was to ſee TORQUATUS, in any other manner, or with any other eyes, than he was to ſee thoſe two congenial ſouls; there is nothing, in either the analogy of ſenſe or of language, to make us imagine, there could be any ſuch diſtinction.

[t] Exod. xxiv. [u] Chap. xxiii. 9. [w] Virg. Æn. vi. [x] *Cernimus* animo, *videmus* naturâ, *aſpicimus* ex improviſo, *ſpectamus* voluntate, *intuemur* curâ.

For any thing therefore that the learned author has advanced, by way of criticiſm, upon this part of the text under examination, I apprehend, our account of *ſeeing* God, ſeeing him propitious, may ſtill be the true and proper one. But this is not the only expreſſion he has criticized; he diſputes every inch of ground with the aſſertors of the temporal reſtoration of Job, and ſees ſuch a beauty and propriety in his own ſcheme, and ſuch flatneſs and abſurdity in the other, that it is with difficulty, that he forbears a downright cenſure upon it[z]. To make good this point, there is not a ſingle word or particle in the whole text, that has not it ſeems, its peculiar emphaſis; *I know*, muſt import, not moral but abſolute certainty; *my redeemer*, muſt imply, not a temporal but an eternal redeemer; and *living*, muſt ſignify not the living only, but the living God; and yet, excepting only the firſt of them, which is of juſt the ſame uſe upon the contrary, as upon his own plan, he will pardon me, if I have my doubts and difficulties, about the juſtice of his obſervations.

He tells us, the word GOEL, *redeemer*, is ſometimes uſed in the old teſtament, to denote the Meſſiah, and refers in the margin, to two paſſages in it[a], which will hardly admit of any ſuch interpretation, at leaſt, he had done well to prove, and not barely to inſinuate, that they were ſo[b]: but ſenſible how little ſtreſs was to be laid upon theſe, he has indeed recourſe to a collateral kind of argument. He contends therefore, that this *redeemer*, whom Job ſo confidently expected is HAI, "the living and eternal God"[c], that the LXX underſtand it in

[z] P. 20. [a] Gen. xlviii. 20. Iſ. lix. 20. P. 21. *&c.* [b] The word GOEL here made uſe of, is by the LXX rendered Λυτρευς ſeven times; Λυτρουμαι ſeventeen times, and Λυτρωτης twice. In this paſſage they have tranſlated it ὁ ἐκλυσιν με μελλων. But it is no where, that I know of, uſed of the Meſſiah in that character, and in the chriſtian ſenſe of a redeemer of the world from death and the conſequences of ſin. The words of Jacob's bleſſing, Gen. xlviii. 18. *The angel which redeemed me from all evil bleſs the lads*, carry with them no ſuch meaning. And when it is ſaid, Iſ. lix. 20. that the *redeemer* ſhall come to Zion, it is plain a redeemer from the Babyloniſh captivity is intended by the prophets. It is true indeed the apoſtle, Rom. ii. 26. appears to have had this paſſage in his eye; but that he applies it rather by way of accommodation to his purpoſe, than cites it as a direct quotation, (a thing very uſual with him) will be plain, I think, from barely comparing the places together.—In the Targum upon Pſ. lxxviii. 35. and in the ſyriac verſion, the word is rendered by another, which anſwers to Λυτρωτης, Act. vii. 35. and to Σωτηρ, Luke ii. 11. and Act. xiii. 23. and this may have been the chief reaſon at firſt, for explaining the word God here of an *eternal redeemer*, but in this and other uſes of the like nature, it will be highly proper to remember, that though chriſtianity introduced new knowledge, and conſequently new ideas into the world, yet it retained words and phraſes that were well known before. Coſtard's obſervations on the book of Job. p. 36. Notes. [c] P. 22.

"this

" this ſenſe, by tranſlating it ἀεννάω, and that the word *living* is uſed " to diſtinguiſh the deity by the oldeſt writers of ſcripture[d]; God, " ſays he, is expreſſly called *the living* on account of Hagar; a well " was called Beer-LAHAI-roi, the well of *the living* who ſees me, " after his name, who is the fountain of life, who was the preſerver " of her life, the living God Jehovah;" and from hence he argues, " that he is the angel of the covenant; that he is the God of Abra- " ham and the fear of Iſaac;" and from thence comes to his grand concluſion, " that the *redeemer* expected by Job, from his being " called in this text, by the ſame name, and from the common " hope of the faithful about this time of a *redeemer*, muſt be the " great *redeemer* of mankind."

Now what the common hopes of the faithful of a *redeemer*, before Moſes's time were, for there he dates the book, we had a right to be told, in order to ſee the connection between that and the words under examination, provided any uſe was to be made of that one circumſtance towards explaining them; but be that as it will, from one ſingle text of ſcripture, and that no very clear one, to venture upon a deduction of ſo long a chain of concluſions, is ſomewhat extraordinary; not but we may readily grant them all, whenever he ſhall prove that the word HAI, ſimply and abſolutely, denotes the living God; that the word is uſed by the antient writers of ſcripture to diſtinguiſh the deity, is very true, but never that I can read, alone and of its-ſelf; EL HAI, and ELOHIM HAIIM, and LEEL HAI, are the conſtant phraſes throughout the whole old teſtament, for the *living God*; and ſo is ADAM HAI for a *living man*; Kol HAI *every man living*; and NEPHESH HAIAH *a living ſoul*; but what is to be inferred from all this, why juſt the reverſe of what he would inſinuate, that the word HAI of its-ſelf, ſimply and abſolutely, denotes the living and eternal God?

Go but back to the xxxviii[th] chapter of Iſaiah, a chapter fatal to our author's whole ſyſtem both of argument and criticiſm, and you will ſee how this matter ſtands; ver. 18. *the grave cannot praiſe thee, death cannot celebrate thee, the* living, *the* living, HAI, HAI, ſhall praiſe thee; if the word alone, denoted ever the living and eternal God, which I cannot find it ever does, one would think the reduplication of it, as in the inſtance before given, ſhould add a ſtill more particular emphaſis, and fix it preciſely to this one ſubject; but

[d] Gen. xvi. 14.

there we ſee, it imports the *living men*, and that too not on the other ſide but on this ſide the grave.

But let us conſider, what it is our author offers in ſupport of this his interpretation; he quotes a paſſage in Geneſis, where he has diſcovered that LAHAI denotes the living God; and without ſo much as once ſuggeſting to the reader, that there was any doubt or difference among the learned, about this interpretation, goes on to build his whole argument upon it, as a chief corner-ſtone; but in fact, the learned are very far from being agreed in this matter, and an interpretation, the very reverſe of his, has not only its advocates among the commentators, but to me ſeems to have its foundation, in the connection of the paſſage he has quoted, with the preceding circumſtances of the ſtory.

The ſtory in ſhort is this. Sarah Abraham's wife, deſpairing abſolutely of bearing any children, conſented that Abraham ſhould take to wife an handmaid of hers, whoſe name was Hagar; ſhe conceived, and upon ſo great an honor vouchſafed to her, which had been denied by God to Sarah, began to deſpiſe her miſtreſs; upon this, Sarah remonſtrated to Abraham, that Hagar's inſolence was grown inſupportable, and he therefore gave her full permiſſion to to treat Hagar in what manner ſhe thought proper; her treatment accordingly grew ſo ſevere, that Hagar found herſelf under the neceſſity of fleeing from the face of her; in her flight, an angel of the Lord, the very firſt we hear of in ſcripture, appeared unto her, and having learnt from her the ſtory of her misfortune, adviſes her to return and make her ſubmiſſions to Sarah, and for her encouragement, promiſes her a numerous and fruitful offspring.

Tranſported at ſo extraordinary an appearance, ſhe determines to return again, but firſt takes care to diſtinguiſh both the perſon and the place, with a name that ſhould be a ſtanding record of this tranſlation; ſhe calls therefore the Lord that ſpake to her VATTIKRA, i. e. *thou Lord ſeeſt me*; and the fountain, where the angel found her, from this very incident, was called Beer-LAHAI-roy, which if we take our author's word for it, ſignifies *the well of the living who ſees me*; but if we attend to the words themſelves and the connection, may more properly be rendered, the *well of her that liveth, and of him that ſeeth*. For obſerve only, what was the extraordinary favor that was to be recorded? it was not merely, that an angel ſaw her in this place, but likewiſe that ſhe ſaw him, and was to *live and multiply her ſeed* after the fight, for this is her reflecti-

on [c],

on [e], *Have I alſo here looked after*, Roy, *him that ſeeth me*? i. e. what a favor is this, for God to look upon me, and I upon him? and this ſenſe of the words coincides with the name, ſhe had juſt before given him, VATTIKRA. i. e. *thou Lord ſeeſt me.* An incident ſo very remarkable, would well juſtify the name, ſhe gives the ſcene of it, Beer-LAHAI-roy, " The well of her that liveth, and of *him that ſeeth.*"

An incident of much the ſame nature, gave name to the place, where Jacob wreſtled all night, and received the bleſſing from God, he called it therefore PENIEL, becauſe ſays he, *I have ſeen God face to face*, and what was more, *my life is preſerved* [f]; if this be the true meaning after all, of this paſſage, there is an end at once of all our author's long parade of argument; and if it be not, I cannot ſee how this one text ſhould prove, that this word alone ſhould by the oldeſt writers of ſcripture, be uſed to ſignify the living God, when it is plain, that the oldeſt writers of ſcripture thought it always, proper to inſert at the ſame time, either EL or ELOHIM, to determine that ſignification, and if EL HAI, denote as it does, no more than *the living God*, and ADAM HAI, no more than *a living man*, I know no rules of grammar or criticiſm, why GOEL HAI, ſhould import any thing more than *a living redeemer*, and not as he would have it, an eternal one, in the perſon of the Meſſiah.

Indeed to do him juſtice, he ſeems aware that he was running into a refinement, unknown to the ſimplicity of the ſacred language [g]; and if after hinting thus much, he had not fallen into what, with my little experience of the hebrew, I cannot help thinking, one more refinement, I could gladly have ſpared the trouble of any farther examination; but he proceeds, " now that this reaſoning is not too " refined, and that *living*, as connected with *redeemer*, denotes the " MESSIAH, we may conclude from the next mark, by which " the patriarch has diſtinguiſhed the redeemer," and that it ſeems, is, AHARON HAL HAPHAR JAKOUM, " he *the laſt* ſhall ſtand upon the earth; and not as our tranſlations have it, he ſhall ſtand *at the latter day*, upon the earth, and in order to make this a diſtinguiſhing mark of the Meſſiah, he refers to two paſſages in Iſaiah, where God is called by the name of AHARON, *the laſt* [h]. But to

[e] Gen. xvi. 13. See Patrick's Com. [f] Gen. xxxii. 30.
[g] P. 25. [h] Ch. xli. 4. Ch. xliv. 6.

ſee

ſee this reaſoning in its true light, we ſhould go to the text he quotes, where indeed it is true that the prophet has diſtinguiſhed him by this name, *I am the firſt* RISON, and *I am the laſt*, AHARON, and *beſides me there is none elſe*.

To ſhew how inconcluſive all ſuch reaſoning is; there is another paſſage, in the ſame prophet, where not one only, but both of theſe diſtinguiſhing marks, of the Meſſiah occur, and that too in the ſame verſe, and yet our tranſlators have rendered them, and rightly too, in the ſame manner with the text in Job, adverbially. It is in the ix^th^ chap. ℣ 1. *Nevertheleſs the dimneſs ſhall not be ſuch as was in her vexation, when* at firſt *he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Nephthali, and* afterwards, or rather *at laſt, did more grievouſly afflict her by the way of the red ſea.*

The two words RISON *the firſt*, and AHARON *the laſt*, ſtand here in direct contraſt, full, I ſhould think, to our author's wiſh, and exactly as they lie in the very paſſage, which he makes his grand criterion; and what is ſtill more, relate to the coming of the Meſſiah; according to his method of proceeding then, the words ſhould be rendered, *he the firſt* lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun, and then, *he the laſt* did more grievouſly afflict her by way of the red ſea, and each of theſe is to be underſtood, not of the different times or ſeaſons of her being afflicted, but of the perſon who afflicted her, of the Meſſiah, for this plain reaſon, becauſe the prophet in the place above quoted, has given him the names of RISON *the firſt* and AHARON *the laſt* [i].

" But we may ſtop a moment here, ſays he, to obſerve that this " part of the text cannot admit of the ſenſe of a temporal reſtoration; " for had Job meant by *my redeemer liveth*, a temporal *redeemer*, man; " he would not have ſaid, *he the laſt* ſhall ſtand, or he ſhall ſtand at " *the latter day* upon the earth. AHARON implies futurity, and there- " fore could not properly be uſed by Job, if his redeemer was a man, " who was then alive, and did then ſtand up on the earth [k]."

I am at a loſs to apprehend, what it was, that could produce ſo untoward an obſervation; for no one that I know of, contends for man being the redeemer, whom Job expected, and it is plain, that man was not the redeemer whom the author meant; a temporal redemption indeed, has been contended

[i] The word AHARON here rendered by our tranſlators, *latter day* is by the LXX tranſlated εἰς τον αἰωνα. Iſ. xlviii. 12. ἰσχαῖος thirty-five times, and μεῖα ταυῖα Iſ. xliv. 6. Coſtard's obſervations on Job. p. 37. Notes. [k] P. 26.

ſor, by many writers upon this ſubject, but a temporal redeemer is a creature of his own imagination, whom therefore he had a right to make as free with, as he thought proper, and to circumſcribe within bounds, the moſt convenient to his own hypotheſis.

And indeed this is the very uſe he has made of him, he firſt ſuppoſes, that this temporal *redeemer* of Job's muſt be man, next, that he was then living, afterwards, that he was at that very time ſtanding upon the earth, and then diſcovers the great impropriety there is, in ſpeaking of him, as one that was to make his appearance at ſome *future time*, for ſo I hope, he would be underſtood by the word AHARON implying *futurity*, and not a future ſtate, which yet I ſometimes ſuſpect he would inſinuate. For my part, I own I cannot ſee the extreme impropriety even of ſuch language, a man may very fairly be ſuppoſed preſent to day, and to appear again to morrow, there is nothing either impoſſible or unnatural in the ſuppoſition; but as it affects not the point, I am concerned to maintain, I am content to leave it under all the impropriety our author has charged upon it.

But nothing it ſeems, will go down, that has any connection at all with a temporal reſtoration, for "admitting that the words do "not relate to a temporal but an eternal redeemer, *i. e.* to God, "how ſays he, can they be meant otherwiſe than of the reſurrecti-"on? for had Job hoped for a temporal reſtoration, either from "God's ordinary or extraordinary providence, what occaſion was there "for his ſaying, *he knew his redeemer would ſtand upon the earth?*" "God might have reſtored him without that circumſtance, and it is "much more probable, that he would, nay in fact we find, he did "afterwards reſtore him, when he had been tried and found faith-"ful, without *ſtanding upon the earth*[l]."

What occaſion there was for St. Paul's ſaying, *I know that I ſhall abide and continue with you all*[m]; is a queſtion, that might be aſked upon the ſame principles, and anſwered too from the ſame ſort of exigency; his longer continuance as an apoſtle, among the Philippians, was preferable upon their account, to his being taken from them, by death or otherwiſe, inaſmuch as he was the great means of their proficiency and improvement in their religion, and was their great conſolation, amidſt the many ſevere perſecutions that had fallen to their ſhare, for their profeſſing of chriſtianity; God indeed might have comforted and confirmed them too in the faith, without St.

[l] P. 26. [m] Phil. i. 25.

Paul's

Paul's continuance or miniſtry among them, that cannot be denied; but yet that his continuance among them, was likely to be attended with this ſalutary effect, was reaſon we ſee, ſufficient to determine him to that ſide of the great dilemma, life or death, that he had been debating with himſelf.

Now what St. Paul's continuance in the world, was to the Philippians, that was Job's redeemer's ſtanding upon the earth, to be to Job, matter of comfort and confidence to him, and at the ſame time, a manifeſtation of God's glory, in the deliverance of his ſervant from a tedious and painful captivity; as both theſe great ends might very competently be anſwered, by his redeemer's ſtanding upon the earth, in order to the temporal reſtoration of Job, and were in fact, anſwered by the reſtoration of him, to all his former fortunes and ſplendor, what neceſſity can we be under to have recourſe to a reſurrection? and what can be our author's meaning by aſſerting, roundly as he does, what the cataſtrophe of the whole plainly contradicts, that "God did afterwards reſtore him without ſtanding up-"on the earth?"

Perhaps it is, that the word HAPHAR, "which our tranſlators have "rendered *the earth*, has a meaning very different from that in which "the word *earth* is generally underſtood; that it only ſignifies *earth* "when earth is equivalent to *duſt*, even that very *duſt* out of which "man was originally taken, and into which he will be ultimately "reſolved: that for God to ſtand in majeſty over *duſt* like this, con-"veys a ſenſe wonderfully juſt and proper, ſuited to the patriarch's "circumſtances, and full of the nobleſt ſentiments: but if we take "the word HAPHAR in its common acceptation, *ſtanding upon the* "*duſt* (as being founded *upon the duſt*, as ſitting or lying *in the duſt*, "phraſes deſcriptive of weakneſs or miſery) will convey but a mean "idea of the redeemer's power [n]."

And yet what idea of power our author would eſtabliſh, or how the idea of power came to enter at all into this argument, is to me a ſecret, yet ſuch particular ſtreſs is laid upon it, that it is plain the whole of our author's argument turns thereon; for that "*ſtanding* "*upon the earth*, is mentioned as an act of the redeemer's power, we "muſt naturally think, ſince the word KOUM, here rendered *ſtand*, "carries ſuch a ſenſe of power; and as the patriarch could never "mean to deſcribe his *redeemer*, on whoſe *power* his hopes muſt be

[n] P. 28.

"founded

" founded as *ſtanding upon the earth*, as many thouſands of miſera-
" ble creatures do, without *power*°." Be it ſo, yet how will all this prove that Job's redeemer's *ſtanding upon the earth*, in the common acceptation of the word, implies ſo mean an idea of *power* as is here ſuggeſted? the reaſon he aſſigns, is, becauſe being *founded in the duſt*, and *ſitting in the duſt*, and *lying in the duſt*, are ſo many phraſes deſcriptive of weakneſs and miſery.

The plain truth of all which is this, a houſe founded in the duſt is in ſcripture phraſe, an image of a weak foundation; a man ſitting in the duſt, or lying in the duſt, is in the ſame phraſe, and according to the cuſtom of the eaſtern people, an object of pity and compaſſion, and therefore, a man ſtanding upon the duſt, or upon the earth, muſt of conſequence, convey the idea of weakneſs or miſery; a conſequence, refined at leaſt, if it be not foreign to the purpoſe. For let us ſee now, how far the phraſes upon which this whole comment is founded, will bear our author out in this concluſion, or indeed whether any concluſion, that can give any light at all into this expreſſion, can be drawn from them.

To this end, I would juſt remark, that *ſitting in the duſt*, or *lying in the duſt*, in the primary and literal ſenſe of the words, import neither weakneſs or miſery; it was the very firſt and moſt natural reſting place for man, and an argument rather of his ſtrength than weakneſs; the ſoftneſs of ſucceeding ages, might introduce indeed as it did, variety of conveniencies for his repoſe or indulgence, but ſtill the ground was originally his ſeat and his bed too.

In proceſs of time, as the luxury of the world increaſed, it became neceſſary to call man back again, to the primitive ſimplicity both of his life and manners, and in all ſeaſons of humiliation public or private, it grew to be one great expreſſion of mourning and mortification, *to ſit or to lie in the duſt*; this was carried like moſt other cuſtoms, to an exceſs, for to expreſs their great grief and deſpair, men conceived, that the bare proſtrating themſelves upon the earth, was not ſufficient, but they rolled themſelves in the duſt, and continued in that condition for a long time; but this we ſee, was a practice which cuſtom, not nature, eſtabliſhed in the world, and was made to expreſs, what in the nature of things it was never meant to expreſs, miſery and unhappineſs.

Now from ſo very particular and merely accidental an uſe of ſuch terms, to deduce a concluſion ſo very general as our author has done;

° P. 27.

 becauſe

becauſe it was cuſtomary in times of mourning, for men to ſit in the duſt, or to lie in it, in order to expreſs their unhappineſs, to argue, that therefore God's ſtanding upon this ſame duſt, muſt denote weakneſs and impotence, is one more refinement it muſt be owned, to ſay no worſe of it; for if Moſes's account of the creation of man be the true one, it was out of HAPHAR, *the duſt of the earth*, that he was created; and what elſe is the duſt mentioned in the text? or what grounds can there be for a diſtinction ſo nice and recondite, as that which is here offered, of God's ſtanding in power and majeſty, over that duſt out of which man was made, and with weakneſs and impotence over that duſt, which is generally underſtood by the word earth? when it is plain, that they meant originally one and the ſame thing; when it was out of the duſt of this very earth, that man was originally formed, and into the duſt of this very earth, that he was ultimately to be reſolved.

I am not fond of prying too cloſely, nor will I now, into the defects of any attempt, to throw freſh light upon a book, which wants all the light, we can fairly come at; ſo ſhall cloſe where our author does, in agreeing with him, upon his ſtate of the text, that whatever Job's own conviction of the matter might be, it was not likely, that the world would entertain the ſame ſentiments of it; for, he concludes, "though his hope was great, and his words are ſtrong, "and as we now ſee ſince the publication of the goſpel, beautiful "and expreſſive of the ſublimeſt truths; yet they were read, and "naturally would be read, without having their meaning clearly con-"ceived; and mankind in earlier times, though reading literal "truths, would for want of other light, be unable to underſtand "them in their full and literal ſenſe."

What could draw from the learned author, this remark, I cannot gueſs; nor yet, how far the goſpel has contributed towards explaining it; for truths wrapt up in myſtery, or conveyed in figure, fable or allegory, might naturally enough, require time to bring them to their full maturity, or light to unfold them, but that literal truths delivered in words ſtrong, beautiful and expreſſive, ſhould not have their meaning clearly underſtood, or as he explains himſelf, not underſtood in the literal ſenſe, is a misfortune, that muſt have been peculiar to thoſe earlier times.

The learned author will pardon the freedom of theſe remarks, upon a performance, which it muſt be owned, wants neither the ſpi-

rit

rit of piety, nor the authority of great names on the ſame ſide of the queſtion, to recommend it: but thus much was due to the argument I ſate down to, to reſcue it from ſuch objections, as men of learning had raiſed againſt it, as well as to ſupport it by all the proofs I could produce for it; if in the courſe of this undertaking, I have been led beyond my firſt deſign, of deducing the *temporal reſtoration of Job*, from the machinery and conduct of the poem, and digreſſed inſenſibly into the province of criticiſm, it was only to attend the learned author through ſome perplexity, which a celebrated paſſage in this work had occaſioned, and which by this time I would hope, has been ſufficiently vindicated both to ſenſe, truth and language, notwithſtanding the ſevere imputation he has loaded it with, of being "a "ſtrained empty pomp of words," or what is ſtill harder, "the ſpeech and diction of a lower writer, uſing a language which he did not underſtand [p]."

Upon the whole then, the language of the text, the circumſtances of the ſtory, and the conduct of the *drama* all concur to fix the preciſe meaning of the words under examination, to the hopes and aſſurances, that Job had conceived of ſome future *temporal deliverance* from all his calamities; he was perſuaded, that his redeemer was a living one; that ſome time hereafter, this living redeemer of his ſhould ſtand upon the earth; that he ſhould one day ſee this living redeemer of his, even God himſelf, favorable and propitious to him; that with his eyes, he ſhould behold him thus propitious; that it was God himſelf, and no one elſe, that he ſhould behold; and that in his fleſh, compoſed as he was of fleſh and blood, he ſhould ſee him, though contrary to all appearances and probability, conſidering that *his very reins were conſumed within him.* A ſtronger faith, or a more explicit profeſſion of his faith, could neither well be given nor demanded, but a faith leſs ſtrong or leſs explicit, had been inſufficient for the purpoſes of the *drama*, which plainly centring in the reſtoration of him to all his former glory, required of courſe that he ſhould firſt be convinced of the poſſibility of ſuch a reſtoration, which he ſo much doubted, and then bear his teſtimony to it, which he ſo induſtriouſly avoided, before he could properly be admitted to the privileges of it.

[p] P. 4.

SECT. IV.

E'ER this, one would be induced to think, that the temporal reſtoration of Job is the principal aim and buſineſs of the poem under enquiry; let us now ſee, what effect a *drama* built upon ſuch a plan, and executed upon ſuch principles, as have been here ſuggeſted, was likely to have with the captive Jew, or whether the exhibiting ſuch a performance, during the Babyloniſh captivity, would naturally anſwer the ends and purpoſes, we have been contending for.

And here it may fairly be laid down, that ſuch a performance at this ſeaſon, would anſwer exactly the ſame ends, and have exactly the ſame effect, in the Babyloniſh captivity, that the advocates for the high antiquity of it, contend for in the egyptian bondage, *i. e.* "it was likely to be an extremely proper conſolation to the jewiſh nation to reflect on, who had already endured, and ſtill continued to endure ſo great afflictions; and was therefore probably wrote, to comfort them, with an aſſurance from the example of Job, that their preſent ſufferings were a trial upon them, (though they might alſo ſee, that their ſins and idolatry had cauſed them) and that if like Job, they humbled themſelves before God, and truſted in his mercy, they would be delivered as he was, and in due time be rewarded with the inheritance of the land, and all the bleſſings promiſed to their forefathers[q]."

But to ſee this matter in its true light, we ſhould have the whole machinery of the poem before us, which is briefly this; in the prologue, is introduced under the name of JOB, a perſon of great renown no doubt; head of the moſt numerous family and dependants in all the eaſt; reſpectable for his ſuperior dignity and fortunes; and of courſe, for the great authority theſe naturally create; but remarkable moſt of all, for the particular virtue of patience. Upon his high reputation for this one virtue, the devil takes upon him to inſinuate, that his pretenſions to it were none ſo great, as the world had conceited of it, or he himſelf affected, and that if he had but God's permiſſion once to handle him, in the manner he propoſed; he would ſoon convince him, that he was neither the pious nor the patient man,

[q] Jackſon. Belief of a future ſtate, p. 36.

he

he had paſſed upon the world for; this obtained, he goes to work upon his family and fortunes, but is defeated in a firſt, ſecond, and third attack upon them, and Job's patience is triumphant in each inſtance.

Foiled as it were, at his own weapons, Satan intercedes with God for one more attack, and that was to be made upon his perſon, this again is granted him, but with an expreſs proviſo, that he brought not his life in queſtion; in conſequence of this permiſſion, he ſmites Job with boils from head to foot, yet neither here did he ſucceed; till at length he introduces three of his once moſt intimate friends, but grown of late his enemies and perſecutors, to behold ſo miſerable an object, and to inſult and deride him, upon ſo wretched a fall from his former glory; here the hero's virtue fails him, and he falls into the fouleſt blaſphemy, and the moſt ſullen deſpair: for if this be not deſpair and blaſphemy too, it is extremely hard to ſay what is [1]. *Let the day periſh wherein I was born, and the night in which it was ſaid, that a man-child is conceived; let that day be darkneſs, let not God regard it from above, neither let the light ſhine upon it; let darkneſs and the ſhadow of death ſtain it; let a cloud dwell upon it; and let the blackneſs of the day terrify it; as for the night, let darkneſs ſeize upon it; let it not be joined to the days of the year, let it not come into the number of the months; Lo! let that night be ſolitary, let no joyful voice come therein; let them curſe it that curſe the day, who are ready to raiſe up their mourning; let the ſtars of the twilight be dark, let it look for light but have none, neither let it ſee the dawning of the day*; and this gives an opening to the *drama*.

Satan's buſineſs was now done, and accordingly we hear no more of him; ſtill the victory was not to declare thus abſolutely in his favor: that in a moral *drama*, exhibited for a document of piety and patience, had been an offence indeed againſt all good manners, and had counteracted the very plot and buſineſs of the poem; the uſe therefore that was to be made of the three friends, was in the firſt place, to convict Job of his being at the bottom a very bad man, and this they do, by reſolving all his ſufferings into ſome guilt or other of his, which was not the leſs certain for not being public, incapable of giving any other account, and unwilling at the ſame time to give a

[1] Mr. Selden diſtinguiſhes, and rightly, between direct blaſphemy, ſuch as that of Rabſhakeh's and Naboth's, and indirect blaſphemy, which he thus defines: quando ſanctitas, poteſtas, veritas, unitas numinis, aut convicio ultrò ac diſerto proſcinditur, aut ex profeſſione actuve aliquo palam ac procaciter negatur. Selden. De jure Nat. & Gent. p. 263.

more

more charitable one, of all his misfortunes: this of courſe he perſiſts in denying, and that cauſes the greateſt part of the debate between them.

In the next place, they were to inſinuate to him, that bad as things were with him, there was yet a way for him to retrieve them all, and that if he would only be brought to confeſſion and repentance of his ſins, he might ſtill be reſtored to all his former glory, and recover not only his fortunes and poſſeſſions, but his health too and ſtrength, ſo miſerably impaired, by the grievous malady he had ſo long labored under; but here again recurred the ſelf ſame difficulty, for repentance of courſe, implied a conſciouſneſs of guilt, and that was a ſecret, of which he intended not them the honor of the diſcovery, whom he looked upon to be full as bad as they would needs repreſent him to be: for the matter indeed of his being reſtored again, though it ſeemed to him in the laſt degree improbable, as well as undeſirable in his preſent condition, as they had labored the point with ſo much earneſtneſs, proved it with ſuch arguments, and backed it with ſuch authority, he found the leſs difficulty in giving it up to them, but they muſt pardon him if he went on to aſſert his innocence.

Upon this, enter one divinely inſpired, in the perſon of Elihu; he repeats all the ſame arguments they had been urging, and tells him that what thoſe hypocrites had been preaching up, with ſo ſanctified a face, and with ſuch a ſolemn pretence to inſpiration, he was come to confirm to them, with the authority of a prophet ſent from God: that in that quality, he could neither compliment him nor them; not him, becauſe he had ſo pertinaciouſly aſſerted all along his innocence, which was not true of the beſt of men, but abſolutely falſe in his own caſe; not them, becauſe what they had been delivering, was rather to ſhew their learning and philoſophy, in an empty parade of words, than to ſerve the cauſe of virtue, which in fact they had not ſo much at heart; that therefore the advice they had been giving him, would well become themſelves, and it were better for them, to make as early an acknowledgment of their ſins and their hypocriſy, as they had counſelled him to do; in the mean time both they and he would do well to conſider, that the wiſdom of God was unſearchable, and his power irreſiſtible, that it was not for man to call either of them in queſtion, but to ſubmit to his diſpenſations with all humility, and to await his deliverances with all reverence. *Surely* ſays he, it is meet to ſay unto *God, I will offend no more* [r].

And

And for the appearance of ſome ſuch character as this, upon the ſtage, the reader had all along been prepared, by the repeated importunity of Job to ſee God himſelf, and reaſon with the Almighty upon the ſubject of his own innocence, and of God's perſecution of him; ſtill that, in the conduct of the *drama*, was an appearance reſerved for the cloſe of all, and in the interim, Elihu was to preſent himſelf as he does, to prepare and ſoften him by offering ſuch arguments, or interpoſing ſuch reproof, as might fit him for the conference he had ſo much at heart, and by mortifying his vanity, and convicting him of his guilt, render him the proper ſubject of that divine mercy, which he ſtood ſo much in need of, and of that reſtoration, which after all his doubts and diſbelief, he had at length thought proper to embrace.

Elihu therefore very remarkably, opens his commiſſion by telling him, *behold I am according to thy wiſh in God's ſtead, I alſo am formed out of the clay* [t]; i. e, a man though I am, formed out of the ſame materials as thy ſelf, I here appear charged with credentials of no leſs authority than of heaven its-ſelf; *I therefore will ſhew my opinion, for I am full of matter, the ſpirit within me conſtraineth me, behold my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burſt like new bottles* [u]; that theſe words import nothing ſhort of a divine inſpiration, I have little doubt [w], and concur therefore with the learned author of the *divine Legation &c.* that under the perſon of Elihu, was deſigned ſome prophet, whoſe buſineſs it was to ſtand in God's ſtead to the people, that he ſpeaks in a ſtrain conformable to that character, with all the dignity and at the ſame time with all the tenderneſs of one of God's prophets, and I might add too, in the very language they ſpoke to the Jews at this period; and though I differ as to the perſon, for reaſons which will ſhortly be aſſigned, I agree with him, that it was none other than the ſacred writer himſelf [x].

To crown the whole, enter God himſelf in the whirlwind, in quality of the Θεος απο Μηχανης; he firſt takes Job to taſk, upon the ſubject *of his darkning council by words without knowledge*, of his

[t] Ch. xxxiv. 31. [u] Ch. xxxiii. 6. [w] Ch. xxxii. 17.

[w] Inſignis allegoria, qua ſe impulſu cæleſti agitari, atque ad cauſam Dei defendendam interiore æſtu accendi innuit.—Una comparatio, cujus membra venuſte tranſpoſita, a muſto utribus indito, quod anguſtiis illis concluſum pelles rumpere nititur, reſpirationemque ſibi utcunque parat. Cernis hoc pacto ut res novas reſpondere ventri, & muſtum eleganter deſignare æſtum illum mentis, a ſpiritu ſancto accenſæ ad cauſam Dei peragendam. Grey in loc.

[x] Div. Legation. Vol. II. p. 345.

impious pretences to account for the unſearchable ways of providence, and then by a magnificent diſplay of his omnipotence, teaches him, that it was not for man, to ſit down to account for the appearances even of the natural, and much leſs of the moral world, but that it was his duty, to reſt ſatisfied with whatever diſpoſitions, God had been pleaſed to make in both; upon this Job comes to ſubmiſſion, and makes a formal recantation of all he had been arguing ſo perverſly throughout the *drama*, and an humble confeſſion of his ſins before God: a point reſerved, as was before hinted, for the cloſe of this poem, and which the three friends had never been able to gain upon him.

In ſhort the cataſtrophe at length is, they are condemned, and Job is acquitted, and agreeably to the reſerve that God had made of his life, in the commiſſion he gave to Satan, and in conformity with the whole drift and intrigue of the *drama*, *the Lord turns the captivity of Job*, he makes his appearance again, in more than all his former ſplendor and magnificence; then come in all his old friends and acquaintance, and with every expreſſion of joy, that hearts big with ſurprize could adminiſter, they congratulate him upon this unexpected revolution; every poſſeſſion he formerly had, is now doubled to him; he begins as it were, life over again; he begets ſons and daughters; and ſurvives his captivity a hundred and forty years.

And what now could the captive Jew conclude from ſuch a repreſentation as this? was it poſſible for him to ſit an unconcerned ſpectator, when the hiſtory of his whole life was thus drawn out upon the public ſtage, and he muſt want eyes not to ſee that all was his own picture? It was he, who was thus querulous and peeviſh; that was wiſhing ever and anon to plead his own cauſe and juſtify himſelf before God; it was he, that was continually averring his innocence, notwithſtanding it was clear that his captivity was the puniſhment of his ſins; that dared to reproach his maker with injuſtice, and his providence with partiality; that had preſumed to fix ſo impudent a calumny upon God's government of his people, that the *fathers had eaten ſower grapes, and that the childrens teeth were ſet on edge*. Who did he think, was it, that doubted and diſbelieved every tender of divine mercy and favor, that was made him in all his diſtreſs, but the captive Jew? who but he, deſpaired ſo abſolutely of all recovery, of ever ſeeing *that body of his, the temple of the Lord*, riſe again in all its antient ſplendor, and who but he had re-

ceived ſuch gracious promiſes and aſſurances, that it one day ſhould ſo?

And here was the ſecret charm, that was ſure to operate at laſt with him, how ſlow ſoever might ſeem its progreſs; a return to his own country, without the promiſe at the ſame time of reſtoring his temple, the deſire of his eyes, the perfection and beauty of the whole earth, had been but an inſipid kind of comfort, to one whoſe whole ſoul was wrapt up in the thoughts of it, and who had been diſpirited beyond all relief, if he had not been told *that the glory of the latter houſe ſhould exceed the glory of the former* [y]. The proſpect he had been flattered with, by God's prophets, of this glorious ſight, could not but awaken his attention, and make the application of every paſſage, that had but the leaſt look that way, obvious, as it was welcome; it was impoſſible for him, who had conceived ſuch high expectations of the ſize and beauty of the future temple, and who was ſo well acquainted with the materials and ornaments of Solomon's, to hear of *his houſe being rebuilt*, of *the gold of Ophir*, of *the great plenty of ſilver*, of *making his prayer to God*, and of *paying his vows* therein, and not inſtantly to feel the obvious meaning of ſuch expreſſions [z].

Much the ſame kind of reflection would lead him to conſider, that under this very body of Job's, thus ruinated, and thus ſhortly to be repaired, the ruins and reparation of his church and polity might after all, be ſhadowed, and that huge difficulty he had ſo long conceived, of the impoſſibility of his temple ever riſing again in half its former magnitude, be the very difficulty, that embarraſſes all Job's reaſonings, and enters into all his diſbelief concerning the reſtoration of that body; and how fine ſuch an allegory as this is, we may conclude from St. Paul's adopting it; *know ye not*, ſays he, *that your body is the temple of the living God* [a]; a paſſage which reciprocally reflects great light upon the parallel figure here in Job, and which perhaps without ſome ſuch authority, had been too bold to have pronounced upon.

But for the matter of authority, we have a greater than St. Paul, that authenticates the figure; *deſtroy* ſays our Saviour, *this temple and I will build it again in three days*; the Jews inſtantly objected to the impoſſibility of ſuch a noble ſtructure as their temple, that

[y] Hag. ii. 9. [z] Chap. xxii. 22. [a] 1 Cor. vi. 19.

had been forty and ſix years in building, being reared again in the compaſs of ſo ſmall a time, and treated the very thoughts of it as chimerical, till after his reſurrection, when they found that in fact he had been ſpeaking of *the temple of his body*; and not of the temple at Jeruſalem [b].

The Jews of this time, miſapprehending Chriſt in this inſtance, was no argument that his body was not the temple he ſpoke of, no more than Job's doubting or diſbelieving the poſſibility, of his body being reſtored whole and entire again to him, might not convey the ſelf-ſame meaning to the Jew in his captivity; and if the pleaſing idea conveyed through ſuch a repreſentation as this, could but raiſe in him, a devout ſenſe of God's power to reſtore him one day or other, and the conviction of it reduce him to ſubmiſſion and repentance, the repreſentation would have the very effect, for which it was exhibited; that is, he could neither be at a loſs to know, that e'er long upon the terms of his ſubmiſſion, he was to be delivered from a tedious and inglorious captivity, nor how long he was to continue under it; for it required no great depth of reaſoning, to deduce the certainty of his reſtoration from the event of Job's ſtory, nor any great compaſs of numbers, to deduce a ſeventy years captivity from the hundred and forty years, which he is ſaid to have ſurvived it, when he was apprized before hand, that in every other inſtance the Lord gave Job twice as much more as he had before; a circumſtance, which alone ſhould ſeem to give all the weight and credit to this explication, which any explication can ſtand in need of.

Inſtruction conveyed through ſo pure a medium, as ſuch a repreſentation, would have all the effect, without any of the inconveniencies of precept, would ſtrike the mind with equal force, but with leſs violence, would more compendiouſly, eaſily and pleaſantly inform the underſtanding and direct the practice. For as a great maſter of the human mind has determined, upon the point of example, " precepts are delivered in an univerſal and abſtracted manner, naked and void of all circumſtantial affairs, without any intervention, aſſiſtance or ſuffrage of ſenſe, and conſequently can have no vehement operation upon the fancy, and do ſoon fly the memory; like flaſhes of lightning, too ſubtle to make any great impreſſion, or to leave any remarkable footſteps upon what they incounter; they muſt be expreſſed in nice terms, and digeſted in exact method; but

[b] Joh. ii. 21.

examples,

examples, with leſs trouble and more ſpeed, cauſe us men to comprehend the buſineſs, repreſenting it like a picture expoſed to ſenſe, having the parts orderly diſpoſed and completely united, ſuitably cloathed and dreſſed up in all its circumſtances: contained within narrow compaſs, and perceptibly at one glance, ſo eaſily inſinuating its-ſelf into the fancy, and durably reſting therein; in ſuch a picture, you ſee at once deſcribed, the thing done, the quality of the actor, the manner of doing, the minute ſeaſons, meaſures and adjuncts of the action; with all which you might not perhaps, by numerous rules be acquainted; and this is the moſt facile, familiar and delightful way of inſtruction [a]."

Still it muſt be owned, there remains a difficulty or two, in the winding up of the drama, not quite ſo eaſily accounted for; the character of Job, how reſigned ſoever in the prologue, in the progreſs of the drama, is plainly that of a captious, querulous, diſcontented and deſponding wretch; of one whom no arguments could convince that he was in the wrong, no perſuaſions of his friends could prevail upon, to come to any ingenuous confeſſion of his ſins; who if perchance one moment, he ſeem to relent and own his guilt, the very next, is aſſerting his innocence the more roundly for it; who drops indeed occaſionally ſome of the nobleſt ſentiments of religion, and ſome of the moſt ingenuous acknowledgments of his errors, but perſeveres not a ſingle moment in any one of them, wavering continually between hope and deſpair, and between faith and infidelity; who in ſhort, is to be wrought upon by no tenders of mercy, but if ever, muſt be reduced, as God reduces him, by downright force, and by appeals to omnipotence.

The character of the three friends is the very contraſt of all this, their viſit has the air of great friendſhip and civility, all the appearance of concern and ſympathy; they all maintain one and the ſame argument, and that a very pious and good one, all concur in preſſing his ſubmiſſion upon the ſame principle, and all agree in putting his repentance upon the ſame motive, the poſſibility of his reſtoration; in ſhort, upon the face of the drama, there runs a vein of great zeal and piety throughout all their converſation, whereas throughout Job's, there flows a torrent of blaſphemy and unbelief, and yet, *credat Judæus Apella!* Job is juſtified by God himſelf and the three friends are condemned. One character has been handed down through a

[a] Barrow's works. Vol. III. p. 13.

long ſucceſſion of ages, as a mirror of patience, the other has been ſtigmatized even to a proverb, with reproach.

Though one would almoſt ſuſpect then, that ſcarce any ſtate whatever of Job's caſe, deduced from this performance, can ever elicit all that patience, for which the world has embalmed his memory, yet perhaps, there is ſomething in the proverbial reproach caſt upon the three friends, that may lead us to ſome tolerable account of the true ſtate of the caſe with them. For it is the ſuſpicion of uncharitableneſs and inſincerity in Job's three comforters, that has placed their characters in ſo diſadvantageous a light, with the world, their intruſion upon his privacy and retirement at a time, when nothing could juſtify it, but a friendly aim of adminiſtring to him conſolation, and pouring in oil into the wounds of an afflicted friend; but then to ſucceed in this, there muſt be firſt an opinion of their ſincerity, where this is wanting advice and condolance are only ſo much idle talk, and reproof from ſuch hands, is but adding inſolence to impertinence.

For whatever pious and tender ſentiments they might convey, under an appearance ſo ſpecious, as that of friendſhip, yet if Job was but well acquainted enough with them, to know that nothing leſs was the true caſe with them, and that at the bottom, they were downright hypocrites, he would of courſe be as averſe to making any conceſſions to them, upon the ſubject of his guilt, as to giving them the credit of being the inſtruments of his repentance: he would naturally as he does, traverſe all their deſigns upon him, either by peremptorily denying the truth of their arguments, or by dextrouſly evading the application of them. In the mean time, if perhaps they had flattered him, in the courſe of the debate, with any proſpect of God's extending his regard to him, and of his being one day reſtored again; this was a ſecret, of which he had a very good right to avail himſelf, if he thought proper, as it neither inferred his being guilty, to be perſuaded of it, nor his being worſted, to acknowledge that he was ſo; it was too intereſting a conſideration, not to have in due time, the weight it had with him, but at the ſame time, it was a victory of no conſequence to his three friends, whoſe point it was, to evince his guilt in the firſt place, and in the next, to ſatisfy him of his reſtoration; the one Job might ſafely give up to them, without any great opinion of their ſincerity, as it flattered his own vanity, the other could not be granted them, without

without the higheſt compliment to their ſincerity, as it ſurrendered up his innocence.

When therefore, at the cataſtrophe of the poem, God is introduced, as expreſſing his indignation againſt the three friends, *becauſe they had not ſpoken of him the thing that was right*, it was not, we may be ſure, any thing either right or wrong in the argument itſelf, that he meant to criticize, for that was the very ſame with what Elihu had been preſſing, and God himſelf had authenticated; but it was the ſpirit of hypocriſy and inſincerity, with which they had been haranguing all along, upon the ways of providence that he condemns; the keenneſs and acrimony, with which they had been plying Job upon a ſubject, which they themſelves neither believed nor regarded, at the ſame time they held forth upon it with ſuch rhetorick, and maintained it with ſo much philoſophy; it was in ſhort, their impious preſumption in aſſerting inſpiration, for what they had been ſaying, and profaning the name of God and truths ſo divine, with ſuch unhallowed lips as theirs, that he takes them to taſk upon. The expoſtulation therefore with them, is much the ſame as that in the pſalm already touched upon, *why doſt thou preach my laws, and takeſt my covenant in thy mouth; whereas thou hateſt to be reformed, and haſt caſt my words behind me? thou haſt let thy mouth ſpeak wickedneſs, and with thy tongue thou haſt uttered deceit* [d].

Of all this they had had frequent admonitions, and reproofs too from Job, and had been impeached by Elihu, but of all this they had not, like his ſervant Job, come to any confeſſion, nor repented, as he had done, in duſt and aſhes; therefore God proceeds to ſentence againſt them for their incorrigible hypocriſy, and in return for all their pretended piety for Job, directs Job to extend his piety towards them, and to pray for them, making him the inſtrument of their acceptance, as they had aſſumed to themſelves the honor of being the inſtruments of his; an article, the moſt mortifying in their particular caſe, and that ſeems to prove beyond all contradiction, that it was their preſumption and pride, their hypocriſy and inſincerity which brought upon them a ſentence which, in no other view of it, could be juſtified, but in this, does honor to the judge, and juſtice to the cauſe, and rounds at once the drama, the moral and the allegory.

[d] Pſ. l. 16.

Though

Though I differ therefore widely from the learned author of *the divine Legation &c.* both as to the particular period, which he aſſigns for this performance, and the perſons, whom he conceives to be ſhadowed under the three friends, becauſe I think both the one and the other, to be carried down too low, in point of time, to furniſh matter of conſolation to the captive Jew, yet to his ſagacity it is owing, that the world is brought acquainted with the real character of three perſons, that have been ſo little known for ages paſt, and ſet right at length in the ſentence pronounced upon them, a difficulty, which has ſtaggered every enquirer; "what is rather to be admired, ſays he, is the ſevere ſentence paſſed upon the three friends for impiety, a thing utterly inexplicable on the common interpretation: for let them be as guilty as they would to Job, they are all the way advocates for God, and hold nothing concerning him that did not become his providence."

"But once ſuppoſe, he proceeds, theſe three friends repreſent the adverſaries of the Jews, and the difficulty vaniſhes; their pretences are all hypocritical, and they impiouſly aſſume the patronage of God, only to carry their malice on againſt Job, to more advantage; why the writer of this book, did not openly expoſe the malice of their hearts, as Ezra and Nehemiah have done, was becauſe the nature of the work would not ſuffer it, the queſtion of the debate and the managers of the queſtion neceſſarily requiring, that the part they took, ſhould have a ſpecious outſide of piety and veneration to God [e]." All this is exceedingly juſt and beautiful, apply it only to the old adverſary of Judah, the Edomite, and lay the ſcene of it during the captivity, but it loſes all its pointedneſs and propriety, if carried lower than that event and applied to the later enemies of the Jews, Geſhan, Tobiah, and Sanballat, whoſe oppoſition commences only with the rebuilding of the temple, as their conſpiracy owed its birth to Cyrus's commiſſion for it.

What then you will ſay, becomes all the while, of Job's patience, or what could be his particular merit, that ſo very ſignal a declaration ſhould be made in his favor, and God himſelf be introduced, to juſtify a character abandoned as we have drawn it, to unbelief and deſpair? The patience of Job is a thing much talked of, and the very firſt and laſt too, which all men naturally look for in this performance, and yet examine but his arguments, and

[e] Div. Leg. Vol. II. p. 538.

review

review his whole dramatic conduct, it ſeems to be almoſt the laſt that could be inferred from it.

Either therefore we muſt ſay, that the fame of Job's patience, took its riſe from ſome records or traditions of much earlier date, than this performance, or we muſt have recourſe to other principles, than have ever yet been advanced, to extract from it any ſuch doctrine; the part ſuſtained by the three friends, we ſee, was a feigned one, it has been already ſolved upon that principle, and traced up to its true ſource; let us now try the ſame experiment upon the part too, that Job ſuſtains in the *drama*, and ſee, whether it was not of the ſame kind, and to be accounted for by the ſame ſort of reaſoning; for it is poſſible after all, that he might not be the impatient deſponding wretch he is drawn, no more than they were the ſincere and pious perſons, they are repreſented, and this ſhould ſeem the more probable, from the firſt opening of the prologue, where upon every calamity that befell him, we behold him the humble, devout, reſigned creature, which the higheſt idea of even chriſtian patience could have formed him, in the *drama*, he is a meer medley of impatience and impiety, in the epilogue again, he is all reſignation and humility.

Allow but the author any degree of conſiſtency, and the whole paradox will vaniſh; for in ſhort, the prologue and epilogue preſent his real character, and the *drama* a perſonated one, here Job is acting a part only, there he is the very man he would be underſtood to be; it is ſufficient to all the ends and purpoſes of the poem, that he turn out at laſt, the very character he ſets out, and ſo long as all the crude and undigeſted notions he is made to vent, in this dramatic part, are attoned for at the concluſion, there is ſufficient amends made for the liberties the author had taken, in introducing him upon the ſtage, in a light ſo very diſadvantageous, eſpecially ſince an uſe ſo good and pious, as the reducing the captive Jew to ſubmiſſion and repentance, was to be made of ſuch a repreſentation.

And that this is the very caſe with this character of Job, Elihu very fairly inſinuates, when waving all that had paſſed, in the intemperance of the debate between him and his three friends, he declares, *my deſire is, that Job may be tried unto the end, becauſe of his* anſwers for *wicked men* [f], preventing thereby any concluſions in his diſfavor, till they had ſeen how matters would turn out at

[f] Ch. xxxiv. 36.

the laſt with him. The words which are here tranſlated, *becauſe of his anſwers for wicked men*, are HAL TESUBOT BE-ANSI AVEN, becauſe of his anſwers *in perſons of vanity*, or becauſe of his anſwers *like wicked men*[g], *i. e.* becauſe in the argument he had been maintaining, he had acted a part that belonged not to him, inconſiſtent with the character he ſet out with, and had taken upon him to ſpeak both the ſentiments and language, of men vain and impious, and had added a ſeeming revolt from the cauſe of God to all his other wicked behaviour on this occaſion, *for he addeth rebellion unto his ſin, he clappeth his hands amongſt us, and multiplieth his words againſt God*; a direct inſinuation, that in the end, things were to take a turn beyond what appearances promiſed, and that though hitherto he was made to ſpeak a language foreign to all that was promiſed of him, yet a time might come when he would explain himſelf.

And conſiſtent with theſe expreſſions, in which it is plain the double character of Job is conveyed, are thoſe under which he very fairly intimates, that he knew the three friends were acting a part only as well as himſelf, and were not either the perſons they would paſs for, or the friends they appear to be, at the ſetting out of the prologue, when to ſay no more of them, not a ſingle circumſtance is mentioned to their diſadvantage. Thus, *will ye ſpeak wickedly* for God, and *talk deceitfully* for him? *will ye*, HAPANAV TISSAUN accept his perſon, *and contend* for God? *or will it be good for you that he ſearch you out, or as* one mocketh *a man, do ye ſo* mock him, *he will ſurely reprove you, if ye do ſecretly* accept perſons[h]?

It is a miſtake and a groſs one too, to ſuppoſe with all the commentators, that the *accepting God's perſon*, is the ſame thing as the *having reſpect of perſons*, a partiality ſo frequently condemned in ſcripture; NASA PANIM is the ſame as *ſuſtinuit, tulit perſonam*, among the Latins; it is the *ſuſtaining or taking upon one a character*, for a particular ſeaſon, or for ſome particular end. And this again appears from the context, where ſpeaking wickedly LE-EL, *for God*, and contending LE-EL *for God*; plainly mean the aſſuming the perſon of God, and pleading under that character, and ſo Elihu uſes

[g] Adduco quo exploretur Jobus ad purum putum, ſuper reſponſionibus *inſtar* hominum vaniſſimorum; *i. e.* propter reſponſiones in quibus vanorum & impiorum *characterem induiſſe* videtur. Grey in loc. [h] Ch. xiii. 7. Etiam ſub velo ſpecioſo acceperitis perſonam.

the

the word, *behold I am to thy wiſh*, LA-EL *in God's ſtead.* So when Gideon had broken down the altar of Baal, Joaſh ſaid unto them that ſtood againſt him, HAATTIM TERIBBUN LEBAAL, *will ye plead* for Baal? the very word in Job [i], *i. e.* will ye take upon you the perſon, which indeed is the primary ſenſe of pleading another man's cauſe, and be advocates for him; if he be as he pretends to be, a God, LO IARIB, let him ſpeak for himſelf, in his own perſon, and *plead his own cauſe* [k].

This point cannot be made too clear, for upon it as a central one, turns the whole machinery of the *drama*, nor can the ſentence paſſed upon each party in the *cataſtrophe*, be gotten over but upon ſome ſuch principles; and full therefore to our purpoſe, there is a paſſage in the xvi[th] chapter, which will let us into the whole myſtery, as it unveils at once the dramatic characters both of Job and his three friends; as it ſtands indeed in our bibles, it is moſt wretchedly tranſlated, but with the aſſiſtance of the commentators, and a little attention to the words, the true ſenſe of it will eaſily be retrieved.

The words I refer to, are where Job reproving the three friends for their unmerciful treatment of him, and preſſing at the ſame time the pitifulneſs of his own caſe, which might ſeem rather to deſerve their compaſſion, than provoke their ſpleen againſt him, pronounces of them in plain terms, that MELETSAI REHAI [l]; our tranſlators render the words *my friends* ſcorn *me*, but Dr. Grey, *my friends are my mockers* [m], which, if by *mockers* he mean repreſentatives, or actors that were playing his part, comes pretty near the matter, for ſo the Chaldee paraphraſt has rendered the word MELETSAI, by PARACLETAI, *advocates*, and the two learned criticks Druſius and Codurc, purſue the ſame notion of it, one renders it *oratores*, pleaders or orators [n], the other *advocati*, advocates [o], and the Vulgate Latin tranſlates it *verboſi*, verboſe or talkative.

Now

[i] Ch. xiii. 7. [k] Judg. vi. 13. [l] Ch. xvi. 20. [m] Illuſores mei ſodales mei. Grey in loc. [n] Thargum vertit MELITSAI per vocem Paracleti, *interpretem, oratorem.* [o] *Advocati* Tharg. ſic enim interpretor PARACLETI, non *conſolatores*, ſed *advocati*. Quomodo definitur hæc vox in lib. Muſar. 126. 2. *Orator bonus, qui facunde dicit*, aut *declamat pro homine*. Moſes Ægyptius, PARACLETAI eſt *advocatus bonus pro homine apud regem*, i. e. qui ejus cauſam agit apud regem. In libro Johaſin. 138. 2. *advocatus* dicitur *Judæorum* PARACLIT, & Samaritanorum. Licet etiam vertere, *oratores mei*, aut *rhetores mei*. Druſ. in loc. Paraclètum non *conſolatorem* ſed *advocatum*. *Orator bonus* qui dicit pro eo. Hinc David de Pomariis PARACLIT, *procurator, rhetor*; videndus nunc Baal Aruch, e quo diſces inveniri hanc dictionem & in Thalmud & in Thargum quoque. Job. xvi. 20. in Thargum PARAKLIAI, παρακλητοι μου, advocati mei. In fonte MELITS

Now under this notion of a Paraclete, or advocate, verboſe and talkative, or of an orator, for that is the ſtrict and primary ſenſe of the word [p], is implied a perſon, that takes upon himſelf to plead another man's cauſe, to diſplay his rhetorick in court, in defending another man's property or character, and ſo the antient Rabbins and Talmudiſts uſe it; and our learned Mr. Selden therefore, upon the authority of one of them, tranſlates it *procurator*, a proctor or proxy [q], and all agree in conſidering it as a term wholely forenſic.

Hence it is, that in the new teſtament, the ſame word has been uſed, to ſpecify one of the principal offices of the Holy Ghoſt, who is called by St. John more than once, ὁ Παρακλητος, the advocate, as it is in one place rightly termed [r], and not as we render it, unleſs in a ſecondary ſenſe, *the comforter*; and ſo Heſychius explains the word, *one that takes upon himſelf the patronage or advocateſhip of all men* [s], and Suicer, *an advocate rather than a comforter, one who is called in to be aſſiſting to another* [t].

In this ſenſe our learned Hammond paraphraſes the text, where it is mentioned, and obſerves upon it, that in truth, one notion of the word there is, which ſeems to be eſpecially referred to, when the Holy Ghoſt is called the Paraclete, and that is, that of an *advocate* or *interlocutor*, *i. e.* an advocate of the chriſtian cauſe with God, teaching the apoſtles what they ſhall ſay, when they ſhould be brought before kings and councils for his name's ſake; and an advocate, or *actor* of Chriſt's cauſe againſt the world of unbelievers, and efficaciouſly convicting the adverſary, which ſays he, is the notion of the word among the Talmudiſts, who continue the greek word without the termination, and ſet it in oppoſition to CATEGOR, Καλήγορος, an *accuſer* [u].

And now the ſecret is out with Job, as well as with his three friends, they are by this account of them, a ſet of advocates only, acting a part not properly their own; he hath his wiſh, and what was that? the very next verſe informs us; *O that one might* plead for a man *with God, as a man* pleadeth *for his neighbour*; the word

MELITS *orator, rhetor.* Idem in John xiv. 16. notes. [p] MELITS *interpretatio, diſpoſitio orationis. Menſura. Oratio.* Rad. MALATS *dulcuit, dulcis factus eſt.* Schindler. Lexic. Pentagl. [q] ENTELER eſt PARACLIT vox a Παρακλητος *advocatus*, vox in Rabbiniſmum recepta, i. e. ut et ipſe, *Procurator.* ad hunc modum Phil. Aquinas. Nec quidem aliam ſignificationem res ipſa ferre videtur. Moſes Mikotzi interpretatur per *conſtitutus ejus nomine ut foro agat.* Selden de Synedr. Vet. Hebr. p. 1441. [r] 1 John ii. 1. John xiv. 16. [s] Παρακλητον πνευμα λεγεσθαι, ὡς τας παρακλησεις των ὁλων δεχομενον. Heſych. [t] Παρακλητος ſonat *advocatum* potius quam *conſolatorem*, απο τυ καλεισθαι εις το παρεσθαι τινι. Suicer. [u] Hammond's Annot. in N. T. John xiv. 16.

rendered

rendered *plead* here and elſewhere, is IACAH, which again is another forenſic term, and imports ſtrictly and properly, *litigating a cauſe*, or *arguing a point of law*[t], and ſo the Chaldee paraphraſt has rendered it, *litigavit*, *diſceptavit*; and then Job's wiſh amounts only to this, "O that I might once have liberty to aſſume another character, and to plead, argue and diſpute before God, to diſplay my own talents like ſome venal orator, and maintain a cauſe in ſome other perſon, which in my own, I have no concern with." And this ſenſe of the words, as it hath the authority of the criticks, ſeems too to be the moſt natural, and accordingly, Codurc one of the moſt ſenſible of them upon this book, obſerves upon this very text, that from hence it is, that God pronounces upon Job in the concluſion of the debate, that he *had ſaid the thing that was right*[u], which conſidered in any other light, than his ſpeaking juſt the reverſe of all his real ſentiments in general, I for my part cannot ſee, how ſo much could be pronounced upon.

This expoſition of the words gives a fulneſs to Job's expoſtulations, when he reproaches them with acting a part only, and then aſks of them, *will it be good for you that God* ſearch you out? i. e. can you ſtand this perſonated character of yours out to the very laſt, when God ſhall ſtrip as he ſhortly will, the maſk from off your face? or do you think yourſelves at liberty to *mock God*, or to play with the perſon of God, as you would do with the perſons of men? And what confirms me in thinking this the true interpretation of theſe and ſuch like paſſages in this book, is, that Elihu uſes the ſelf-ſame language, when he appears as he does, in the character of a prophet, and diſclaims expreſsly his appearing in any other perſon, even though he was made as they were, *out of the clay*; AL-NA ESSA PENE ISH, *let me not accept any man's perſon*[w], i. e. let me not perſonate any man; and the real truth is, that he was to appear in a far ſuperior character, was to be the repreſentative of God himſelf, and to prepare both parties for the grand appearance of all, in the cataſtrophe.

Here we ſee one more perſonated character, and the great difference between his and the three friends is, for their argument is all along the very ſame, they were ſpeaking a language none of their own, from meer vanity, and pretended for it what they had not, a divine inſpiration, he ſpeaks the language of God himſelf, and is what

[t] Tharg. in Micah. vi. 2. [u] Codurcus in loc. [w] Chap. xxxii. 21.

he pretends to be, an inſpired prophet; at the inſtant therefore that he appears, Job is ſummoned as it were, into court, and bade to prepare his pleadings, and ſtand up and argue the points he had been ſo long moving for; *If thou canſt anſwer me, ſet thy words in order before me, ſtand up*[x], and God himſelf proceeds in much the ſame form with him; *Gird up now thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee, and anſwer thou me*[y]; where it is a miſtake to imagine, that by *girding up his loins*, is meant making ready for battle, for nothing more is meant by the words, than preparing for the diſpute; the metaphor is borrowed from the ancient manner of collecting the robe round a man's body, the cloſer this was wrapt, ſo much the more attentive he was looked upon to be, the looſer it flowed, ſo much the more negligent and diſſipated[z].

Now that this is no refined diſtinction, or ideal reſolution of Job's character, may be gathered I conceive, from the very caſt and ſtructure of the compoſition its-ſelf; for men of learning and ſkill in the eaſtern tongue, have always obſerved, that the introduction and concluſion, or what is more properly the prologue and epilogue of this poem, are both of them written in a plain ſimple ſtile, ſuch as hath the appearance of hiſtory or narrative, but all the intermediate part is in meaſure, and carried on with the air of a converſation, kept up by four perſons dramatically, *i. e.* in their turns affirming or denying, arguing or ſpeculating, juſt as occaſion offered, or the buſineſs they were met upon, demanded.

From a change ſo ſudden in the caſt of the compoſition, one would be apt to ſuſpect a proportionable change too in the caſt of character, or that where the cool hiſtoric ſtile prevails, ſomething like truth, or however like hiſtory was to be expected; but when once it ſwells into rhetorick and numbers, there allowance of courſe, muſt be made for fiction and fancy; in the former, it is but natural to conceive, the author would keep more cloſe to his original; in the latter of courſe, he would be taking greater liberties, and ſtudying rather the figure than the likeneſs.

If then a grave ſober image of innocence and patience, expreſſed in terms the moſt plain and ſimple, be preſerved with the utmoſt uniformity, throughout the whole prologue, and be reſumed again after a long diſcontinuance, in the epilogue, a change of both ſtile

[x] Ch. xxxiii. 5. [y] Ch. xxxviii. 3. Diſpone orationem ſuam. Vatab. Καῖα τι LXX. Loquar pro Deo ſed *vera*. Grot. Adſum Deo *advocatus*. Codurc. [z] Accinctius dicitur qui induſtrius, diſcinctius qui negligens. Druſius in loc.

and ſentiment in the intermediate part, would create a preſumption at firſt ſight, that ſome different deſign was forming; and if the character its-ſelf, from its gravity and ſobriety, once deviated into intemperance and extravagance, if inſtead of it's characteriſtic virtues of meekneſs and patience, we are entertained with nothing but perverſeneſs and confidence, it is more than probable, that the one is a feigned, and the other the true character, and the preſumption lies on the ſide of the plain unaffected narrative, againſt the florid and ſtudied *drama*.

But ſuppoſing now all this change to be firſt concerted in the prologue its-ſelf, and that we are apprized therein of all this ſudden turn of character, that the moment the *drama* was to open, a conduct the very reverſe of Job's hitherto, was to take place, and language ſuited to that conduct, to be put into his mouth, then it will amount to ſomething more than preſumption, that all that paſſes in the dramatic part, is but ſo much addreſs, a part only aſſumed for a particular purpoſe, and to be laid down again, as ſoon as that was fairly accompliſhed, and that Job in the prologue and Job in the *drama* act two very different parts; and that this is the true ſtate of the caſe, it has been hinted already, may be concluded from the very comment, which the author makes at the cloſe of each ſeparate incident, quite through the prologue, that *in all this Job ſinned not, neither charged God fooliſhly*; and again, *in all this Job ſinned not* with his lips, a fair inſinuation, that ſomething very different in his language, from what had thus far paſſed, was about to take place, and the event very fully juſtified the inſinuation.

Job in the prologue then, is the Jew figured under the character of the real Job, ſo celebrated in eaſtern ſtory, pious, meek and patient, Job in the *drama* is the inſolent, impious and impatient Jew; here, the Jew appears what he actually was in his captivity, there, what he ought to have been, to do juſtice to his original; here, Job is made to ſpeak ſomething wrong, becauſe he repreſented the wrong-headed Jew, there, he ſpeaks every thing right, becauſe in his circumſtances, the real Job would have ſpoken ſo too; and this diſtinction or I miſtake it much, God himſelf has guarded in the deciſion, which he honors their debate with, where he convicts the three friends, for *not having ſpoken* of him *the thing that was right*: and indeed in the prologue they had not ſpoken a ſingle word, and in the *drama* but inſincerely, and Job he juſtifies, for *having ſpoken* of him *the thing that was right*.

Now

Now from what principles can all this acknowledgment of the rectitude of conduct on Job's part, conſidering the perverſeneſs he ſhews throughout the whole *drama*, be ſolved, but from the double character he bears? the reflections he makes, upon ſuch ſeparate incident, in the ſtory of his misfortunes, breath ſuch a ſpirit of piety and patience, and are expreſſed in terms ſo explicit, of his entire truſt and confidence in God, that once ſuppoſe theſe to be the expreſſions to which God refers, when he gives him the credit, of *having ſpoken* of him *the thing that was right*, and conſider them as his genuin ſentiments, and the other as his feigned ones only, and the whole difficulty vaniſhes; for ſure if ever man ſpoke right of God, or properly of his own ſelf, it was when Job uttered thoſe noble reflections of his, *Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked ſhall I return again, the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the name of the Lord.* And again, *what! ſhall we receive good at the hands of God, and ſhall we not receive evil?*

In poſſeſſion of ſuch ſentiments at his heart, Job might well promiſe himſelf as he does, that *in the end he ſhould be juſtified*[a], and this account of it, ſo contrary to all appearances, is greatly countenanced by the words themſelves, in which this teſtimony of God's, that *he had ſpoken* of him *the thing that is right*, is conceived; for the learned Dr. Grey very pertinently remarks, that what is here tranſlated *of me*, in many places ſignifies ἐνωπιον μου, *coram me, apud me, before me, in my preſence*, or, *with me*; and ſo the paſſage is tranſlated by the LXX, the ſyriac and the vulgate; now clear it is, that the whole tranſaction in the prologue, paſſed under the immediate inſpection of God himſelf, and Satan appears in the preſence of God a firſt and a ſecond time, but in the *drama*, God withdraws as it were, behind the ſcene, and preſents not himſelf again till the concluſion of the debate; ſo that I ſhould apprehend, that it is by no means, upon the general ſtate and tenor of the argument, as the learned author thinks, for that had not been handled, ἐνωπιον μου, or *in God's preſence*, and much leſs had it been ſo very well conducted on Job's part, but upon the expreſſions Job had uttered in the prologue, when he ſpoke in his proper character, that this teſtimony is born to him[b].

But there are difficulties and great ones too, it muſt be acknowledged, that lie in the way of every ſolution of this problem, eſpe-

[a] Ch. xiii. 18. [b] Grey. Anſwer to Mr. Warburton, p. 60.

cially when we come to extract from this performance, the grand doctrine, which every reader comes keenly prepared for, the patience of Job; difficulty indeed there is none, were either the prologue or the epilogue to decide the point, for there all is patience and reſignation, but ſo utterly inconſiſtent is his whole dramatic conduct, with this idea, that they who have entered the deepeſt into it, have been only at the deepeſt plunged to account for it.

The double character of Job and his three friends ſeems to me, to bid the faireſt for unravelling the whole myſtery; conſider only each of them, acting a part and ſpeaking too a language foreign to their real character, the one to repreſent the impatient Jew, and the other to convict him, and no wonder then, that whatever jewiſh infidelity could ſuggeſt in ſuch circumſtances, is thrown out by Job, and whatever human piety could inſpire, is preached up by the three friends; but the moment they reſume, each his proper character, there is a tranſition ſo quick, that it amazes one; all the expreſſions of impatience and unbelief on Job's ſide, are dropt in an inſtant, and he repents himſelf in duſt and aſhes; comes over all at once, to the very arguments he had been denying, and adopts every ſentiment he had been oppoſing; all thoſe rigid maxims of virtue, and thoſe divine leſſons of patience, which the three friends had been teaching, appear to be none of theirs, for they are condemned for their hypocriſy; and are placed to the account of Job, for he is juſtified; and from a peeviſh querulous Jew, the part he had ſuſtained, turns out the very *perfect and upright man* he ſet out, *one that feared God, and eſchewed evil.* And from ſome ſuch quick tranſition as this, and the adopting of all the contrary ſentiments from what he had been maintaining all along, in his feigned character muſt be, if from any thing in this performance, inferred the moral of Job's patience.

Nor indeed was leſs than all this due to him, ſuppoſing the traditional Job to be the perſon, under whoſe celebrated piety and patience, this allegory was to be conducted, for it had been tranſgreſſing all the rules of decorum, not to have reinſtated him in his proper character, however ſhrewdly it had been brought into ſuſpicion, by his perſonated one, for that was only hung out for a while, as a glaſs for the impatient Jew to ſee his own face in; but in the mean time, the other was not to ſuffer for being lent out as it were, upon this occaſion, and was conſequently to be made good to him in the concluſion; and therefore though the *drama* ſhuts up with

his

his repentance, the epilogue remarkably, brings him back again to his patience, and eſtabliſhes his innocence.

And of all this innocence of the traditional Job, has the ſacred author made a moſt beautiful uſe in the dramatic Job; for what was eſſential to the former and inſeparable from his character, there happened to be an accidental opportunity offered to avail himſelf of, in the character he makes Job to perſonate, the captive Jew, and this is ſo artfully interwoven into the ſcene, that it has proved one of the great rubs in the way of all the enquirers; whereas the true ſecret is, that the aſſeveration of his innocence, was the one conſtant unvaried topick of the Jew's murmur, from the moment of his captivity, till the prophets had convicted him, not only of the abſurdity of ſuch an obſtinate claim as this, but of the utter falſity of it; which is too the very iſſue of the controverſy upon this head, in the book of Job.

And I know not, but if we go back once again for all, to the caſe of Hezekiah, we may ſee this whole affair intricate as it is, in the cleareſt light. More of Job is not, nor indeed could well be ſaid, than is pronounced of Hezekiah, for it is recorded to his honor, that *he truſted in the Lord God of Iſrael, ſo that after him there was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that was before him.* A very great and a very good man he has been always deemed, but with all his virtues, he found himſelf unequal to that hour of trial, when the prophet warned him of his approaching death, and the boil he labored under, gave too ſenſible a proof of the truth of it; how then does he behave upon this occaſion? Why, the very firſt paſſion that ſhewed its-ſelf, was his pride, and the very firſt expoſtulation he makes, is upon his innocence, *I beſeech thee O Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in all truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy ſight* [c]. Look into that writing of his, when he was ſick, there again you behold an abject deſponding wretch, plunged into all the doubts and difficulties that Job was, about any poſſibility of his recovering, wiſhing again and again, *to ſee God once more in the land of the living*, or what comes to the ſame thing, deſpairing of ever doing ſo, *mourning like a dove* and *chattering like a ſwallow.*

With ſuch diſpoſitions about him, it was improbable enough that he ſhould ever ſee God, yet when this affliction had had its intended

[c] 2 Kings, xx. 3.

operation

operation upon him, and reduced him to his prayers and to his tears, then and not till then, did he receive from the prophet, the comfortable aſſurance, that his tears were ſeen and his prayers heard, and that maugre all the unpromiſing ſymptoms, he ſhould as he did, recover. I will not take upon me to ſay, that this is the very plan, upon which the ſacred author has built his poem, becauſe upon ſome ſuch tradition as that of Job, after all it might be founded, but thus much I will ſay, that there was ſcope enough in this ſtory, compendious as it is, to furniſh materials for ſuch a poem; and that the author, whoever he was, could be no ſtranger to it.

The unexpected revolution of Job's affairs in the poem, could not be more unexpected than this recovery of Hezekiah's was, and if perhaps through the intrigue and windings of the *drama* it appear ſo, ſo much the better, for ſurprize is eſſential to a well-conducted *drama*; for ſo long as in the body of it, all the reaſonable diſpoſitions had been made for ſuch a revolution, which it is plain there were, the cataſtrophe ſtands clear of the objection of being either precipitate or unexpected, and Job might be as he was, reſtored again, though it called for a very cloſe attention to the management of the incidents, and to the turning out of the plot to foreſee that he would be ſo.

What creates I am ſenſible, all the difficulty, and produces all the improbability in affairs being brought to ſo happy a concluſion is, that the *drama* opens with ſuch rage and fury, and runs all along upon ſuch high paſſions and incidents, that it ſeems to threaten nothing leſs than a tragical concluſion; but then this contributes only to enhance the ſurprize, as it ſhould, when at laſt we find all the parties reconciled, and the whole diſpute among them, terminated to the ſatisfaction of all parties. Thus it is, that the Oreſtes of Euripides is conducted, it opens with all the rage of deſpair; and is carried on with ſuch ſhocking ſentiments of cruelty and impiety, as threaten the moſt fatal and bloody event, and yet in the winding up of the *drama* at the cataſtrophe, Apollo makes his appearance, as the Θεὸς ἀπὸ Μηχανῆς, and the ſentence pronounced upon Oreſtes, is ſuperſeded, and that too upon maxims of policy and wiſdom worthy of the God, who interpoſes: Oreſtes in ſhort, contrary to all expectation, marries Hermione, and Electra is ſurprized into a match with her old lover, and Oreſtes's boſom friend, Pylades.

his repentance, the epilogue remarkably, brings him back again to his patience, and eſtabliſhes his innocence.

And of all this innocence of the traditional Job, has the ſacred author made a moſt beautiful uſe in the dramatic Job; for what was eſſential to the former and inſeparable from his character, there happened to be an accidental opportunity offered to avail himſelf of, in the character he makes Job to perſonate, the captive Jew, and this is ſo artfully interwoven into the ſcene, that it has proved one of the great rubs in the way of all the enquirers; whereas the true ſecret is, that the aſſeveration of his innocence, was the one conſtant unvaried topick of the Jew's murmur, from the moment of his captivity, till the prophets had convicted him, not only of the abſurdity of ſuch an obſtinate claim as this, but of the utter falſity of it; which is too the very iſſue of the controverſy upon this head, in the book of Job.

And I know not, but if we go back once again for all, to the caſe of Hezekiah, we may ſee this whole affair intricate as it is, in the cleareſt light. More of Job is not, nor indeed could well be ſaid, than is pronounced of Hezekiah, for it is recorded to his honor, that *he truſted in the Lord God of Iſrael, ſo that after him there was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that was before him.* A very great and a very good man he has been always deemed, but with all his virtues, he found himſelf unequal to that hour of trial, when the prophet warned him of his approaching death, and the boil he labored under, gave too ſenſible a proof of the truth of it; how then does he behave upon this occaſion? Why, the very firſt paſſion that ſhewed its-ſelf, was his pride, and the very firſt expoſtulation he makes, is upon his innocence, *I beſeech thee O Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in all truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy ſight* [c]. Look into that writing of his, when he was ſick, there again you behold an abject deſponding wretch, plunged into all the doubts and difficulties that Job was, about any poſſibility of his recovering, wiſhing again and again, *to ſee God once more in the land of the living*, or what comes to the ſame thing, deſpairing of ever doing ſo, *mourning like a dove* and *chattering like a ſwallow.*

With ſuch diſpoſitions about him, it was improbable enough that he ſhould ever ſee God, yet when this affliction had had its intended

[c] 2 Kings, xx. 3.

operation

operation upon him, and reduced him to his prayers and to his tears, then and not till then, did he receive from the prophet, the comfortable aſſurance, that his tears were ſeen and his prayers heard, and that maugre all the unpromiſing ſymptoms, he ſhould as he did, recover. I will not take upon me to ſay, that this is the very plan, upon which the ſacred author has built his poem, becauſe upon ſome ſuch tradition as that of Job, after all it might be founded, but thus much I will ſay, that there was ſcope enough in this ſtory, compendious as it is, to furniſh materials for ſuch a poem; and that the author, whoever he was, could be no ſtranger to it.

The unexpected revolution of Job's affairs in the poem, could not be more unexpected than this recovery of Hezekiah's was, and if perhaps through the intrigue and windings of the *drama* it appear ſo, ſo much the better, for ſurprize is eſſential to a well-conducted *drama*; for ſo long as in the body of it, all the reaſonable diſpoſitions had been made for ſuch a revolution, which it is plain there were, the cataſtrophe ſtands clear of the objection of being either precipitate or unexpected, and Job might be as he was, reſtored again, though it called for a very cloſe attention to the management of the incidents, and to the turning out of the plot to foreſee that he would be ſo.

What creates I am ſenſible, all the difficulty, and produces all the improbability in affairs being brought to ſo happy a concluſion is, that the *drama* opens with ſuch rage and fury, and runs all along upon ſuch high paſſions and incidents, that it ſeems to threaten nothing leſs than a tragical concluſion; but then this contributes only to enhance the ſurprize, as it ſhould, when at laſt we find all the parties reconciled, and the whole diſpute among them, terminated to the ſatisfaction of all parties. Thus it is, that the Oreſtes of Euripides is conducted, it opens with all the rage of deſpair; and is carried on with ſuch ſhocking ſentiments of cruelty and impiety, as threaten the moſt fatal and bloody event, and yet in the winding up of the *drama* at the cataſtrophe, Apollo makes his appearance, as the Θεὸς ἀπὸ Μηχανῆς, and the ſentence pronounced upon Oreſtes, is ſuperſeded, and that too upon maxims of policy and wiſdom worthy of the God, who interpoſes: Oreſtes in ſhort, contrary to all expectation, marries Hermione, and Electra is ſurprized into a match with her old lover, and Oreſtes's boſom friend, Pylades.

Still there is no diſmiſſing this point, without paying a proper regard to an objection, ſtarted againſt this allegory by an author of great name, whoſe learned labors on this and other parts of ſcripture, call for every compliment, ſhort of an implicit ſubſcription; "the learned Grotius, ſays he, ſuppoſes this book to be written for the conſolation of the deſcendants of Eſau, carried away in the Babyloniſh captivity; he ſaw plainly I ſuppoſe, that the book could by no means, anſwer to the caſe of the Jews, as well for the reaſons already mentioned, as for this likewiſe, that the Jews ſuffered for their iniquity, and the example of Job, is the example of an innocent man, ſuffering for no demerit of his own; apply this to the Jews in their captivity, and the book contradicts all the prophets, before and at the time of their captivity, and is calculated to harden the Jews in their ſufferings, and to reproach the providence of God [c]."

With all deference to the ſentiments of the learned author, I conceive that the example of Job, is by no means the example of an innocent man ſuffering for no demerit of his own; it is indeed the example of a man, contending all along, that he was ſuffering for no ſuch demerit, and aſſerting roundly upon all occaſions, his innocence; but if there be any truth in the account, we have been laboring to eſtabliſh of this performance, ſo far is Job, the hero of it, from being the innocent man, in the dramatic repreſentation of him, which he has generally paſſed upon the world for, that from the very firſt ſetting out of the *drama*, he is ſuſpected, afterwards he is arraigned, and in the end, he is convicted of ſin; the three friends manage this very charge againſt him, Elihu repeats it, and preſſes him to repentance, God himſelf determines upon it, and to complete the whole, Job acknowledges it, ſolemnly retracts the plea he had been inſiſting upon, of his innocence, and repents himſelf at laſt in duſt and aſhes.

And is not this fact, the very caſe, as it ſtood with the captive Jew? was he not carried captive for his ſins? was it not the buſineſs of the prophets to convince him, that his captivity was the puniſhment of his ſins? do they not all along, labor to ſhew him the falſity of that repeated plea of his, his innocence? do they not preſs him to confeſſion of ſin, and urge him at length to repentance? and is he not at laſt reduced, through the tedious diſcipline of a ſeventy years

[c] Sherlock's Diſ. p. 237.

captivity,

captivity, to a ſenſe of his guilt, and of the juſtice of God's providence in puniſhing it? and does he not at length return from his captivity, more good, more pious, more zealous for his law and for his religion than before? *In thoſe days, ſays the Lord, and at that time, the iniquity of Iſrael ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none, and the ſins of Judah, and they ſhall not be found*[d].

If indeed throughout the whole of this book, Job had proved one uniform conſiſtent character, the innocent, the devout, the patient Job, he ſet out in the prologue, concluſions unworthy enough of providence, might have been drawn, as indeed he himſelf has drawn them, for thus afflicting an innocent man, out of meer caprice and wantonneſs; or if in the event, he appeared to be reſtored again, without firſt coming to ſubmiſſion and repentance, the Jew would have been apt enough to catch, and there had been room enough, as the learned prelate ſuggeſts, for his catching, ſome very diſadvantageous impreſſions of God's providence.

The query too, which the learned prelate ſtarts ſo very pertinently, upon the face of Job's ſtory, may poſſibly be reſolved, from this idea of the book; " for ſuppoſing the book to be a meer fiction of poetry, upon what grounds of probability, does the author furniſh Job with ſuch exalted ſentiments of religion, and at the ſame time ſuppoſe them to be ſuch ſecrets to his friends? is there any ſuch inſtance in any author[e]?" Now abating the ſentiments of religion put into Job's mouth, in the prologue and the epilogue, it is but here and there I conceive, that any ſuch ſentiments are furniſhed by the author, to Job's character, and theſe again are ſo ſtrangely intermixed with the doubts and difficulties, he is ever ſtarting about God's providence, that it is hard to pronounce any thing, at leaſt of conſiſtency, upon them.

But ſuppoſe once the book to be allegorical, as well as poetical, a very rational account may be given of all ſuch ſentiments as theſe; for it will be no wonder to hear an Iſraelite, delivering ſuch ſentiments of God and his providence, and much leſs, a deſcendant of the tribe of Judah, occaſionally putting in his claim to the poſſeſſion of ſome ſecrets, not ſo public or common among the other tribes, but peculiar to himſelf, and abſolutely unknown to a people, that had been ſet aſide the poſſeſſion of the birth-right.

[d] Jer. l. 19. [e] Sherlock's Diſc. p. 246.

Something farther therefore than the prologue, we muſt look, before we can pronounce with any tolerable certainty, upon the moral character of the dramatic Job; before we can fairly ſay, he was either patient or innocent, we muſt firſt attend him throughout the whole of his arguments, ſee him fairly through the ſcene, and mark the end of all his trial; and this, I have often been thinking, is the very method of proceeding, recommended by St. James, in the attention to be paid to this character. *Behold we count them happy that endure. Ye have heard of the patience of JOB, and have ſeen the end of the Lord: that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy*[e].

Here are plainly, two very different conſiderations enter into the regard, we are to pay to this ſtory, for I take for granted it is to this ſtory, and not to the traditional Job, that he refers; Job's patience is the one, and God's mercy is the other.

Now in what inſtance, did God's mercy in this caſe, ſo ſignally interpoſe its-ſelf, ſuppoſing Job to be at the bottom, the innocent man, that he is ſaid to be? we ſhall hardly ſay, that mercy was the attribute, whatever other attribute of God we may ſuppoſe, concerned in afflicting him, and expoſing him to the devil's malice and machinations[f]; what then becomes of all this pitifulneſs and tender mercy, ſo much applauded by the apoſtle? or how ſhall we ſee in Job's ſtory, this attribute of God's, ſo egregiouſly diſplayed, as he inſinuates? In *the end* no doubt, of Job's trial, and not before, and in the end, Job promiſes himſelf, he ſhall be juſtified; not before he came to a confeſſion of his guilt, and then he became the object of God's mercy; not before he repented himſelf in duſt and aſhes, and then he became the proper ſubject of reſtoration; then and not till then, the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before, and reſtored him at once to his virtue, his family and his fortunes.

To *the twelve tribes which are ſcattered abroad*, it is, that St. James addreſſes this epiſtle of his, and the firſt and laſt leſſon he gives them, is upon the ſubject of patience, a virtue, that more particularly concerned them, in the diſperſed diſtreſſed ſituation they were now in; he refers them therefore in the firſt place, to their pro-

[e] St. James's Ep. v. 11.

[f] De repreſenter Dieu permettant au Démon de frapper Job de maladie, dans ſa propre perſonne, aprés lui avoir ôté tout ſon bien, et tout ce qu'il avoit plus cher au monde; Qui peut concevoir que Dieu traite une homme de la ſorte, ſeulement pour confondre le Démon, et pour faire voir au Démon, que Job etoit veritablement pieux? Sentim. de quelq. Theol. Holl. p. 180.

phets

phets for their encouragement, and the records of theſe were in their own hands, as the greateſt inſtances the world ever ſaw, of *ſuffering affliction*; in the next, he reminds them of a celebrated inſtance of *patience*, not indeed within their own remembrance, but one they were no ſtrangers to the accounts of, for the book of Job was then in their canon; and points out to them the moral of Job's ſtory, as the grand object of their attention, and the beſt comfort in their ſituation, and the moral of that plainly was, that if they did but ſubmit themſelves to the afflicting hand of God, a time might come, when he would take it off from them, and that how ſevere ſoever and rigid, they conceived him in the matter of their preſent diſperſion, yet at *the end*, in his own due time, they ſhould have a ſenſible conviction, as Job had, and their forefathers too ſhadowed under his name, in the matter of their captivity, that *the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy*.

There are but two paſſages more in ſcripture, if my memory ſerve me right, which either mention the name of Job expreſſly, excepting Job the ſon of Iſſachar[g], or have any relation to his ſtory. St. Paul has quoted a paſſage from the very book, *He taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs*[h], and I have no doubt at all, but that it is the *book of Job*, as it ſtands in the canon of our ſcripture, that it is quoted from; no more than that St. James had his eye upon that very book, in the former inſtance. Ezekiel mentions the name of Job more than once, in one chapter. and ranks him with two well known characters, Noah and Daniel[i]; but whether again, this be not the traditional Job, is with me a queſtion; and that it is ſo, and that this prophet was extremely well acquainted with his traditional character at leaſt, I have reaſons to believe, which in their proper place, ſhall be communicated.

Juſtin Martyr, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, quotes this text from Ezekiel, and inſtead of Noah, Daniel and JOB, reads in no leſs than three places, Noah, Daniel and JACOB, and ſo ſtand R. Stephens's and the reſt of the editions, all but Sylburgius's, who has reſtored JOB from all the antient copies of the bible, in which it is more than probable he is right; but whether the error is to be placed to the account of ignorance in the tranſcriber, as his laſt editor thinks, who might perhaps miſtake Ιωϛ for an abbreviation of

[g] Gen. xlvi. [h] 1 Cor. iii. 19. Job v. 13. [i] Ezek. xiv. 14, 29.

Ιακωϛ,

Ιαχωϛ, or to that negligent manner of quoting the genuine ſcriptures, which might be the effect of his want of ſkill in the hebrew tongue, is a matter, ſuppoſing it an error, of no great conſequence to be decided [k].

[k] Νωε κ᾽ Ιαχωϛ κ᾽ Δανιηλ. Ita ed. R. Stephani, & hic & mox infra, p. 227. Ed. par. utrobique pro Ιαχωϛ habet Ιωϛ ex autoritate Sylburgii, qui eam vocem *e bibliis* ſe reſtituiſſe dicit, atque ita non interpretem modo legere, ſed ipſum quoque Juſtinum repetere. Nobis vero certis de cauſis non adeo liquet librarios hujus errati cauſam ſuſtinere debere, preſertim cum tertio occurrat, p. 369. &c. Neque tamen hæc ita dico, ut pro Juſtini errato hoc habendum ſit, quippe qui haud paulo veriſimilius eſſe cenſeam, librarium aliquem nimis diligentem, vocabulum Ιωϛ compendium eſſe putaſſe τȣ Ιαχωϛ, indeque natam eam lectionem eſſe; non ita tamen, ut cum Sylburgio eam ejicere, alteram in textum recipere auſim. Cl. Thirbius. Annot. in Juſt. Mart. p. 225.

SECT.

SECT. V.

I Have now done with the moſt material parts of this book, the prologue and the dramatic repreſentation of Job, and cannot help flattering myſelf, that in the courſe of this enquiry, ſome tolerable account has been given of each of them, at leaſt, that upon what I firſt ſet out with, the jewiſh plan, the two parts are made to tally with each other, and ſtand not at that unfriendly diſtance, which they have been made to keep, upon every other ſcheme. What remains to be conſidered, is the epilogue, and if that again turn out to bear its proportion too to the other two parts; and not only to round the whole *drama*, but to round it upon exactly the ſame principles, which we have all along made uſe of; to be conceived in the ſame language, and executed upon the ſame plan; there can then ſurely remain but little doubt of the allegory.

Let me juſt remind the reader then, that it was not without reaſon, that we ſet out with that idea of a kind of pilgrimage, we were performing in this enquiry, to the holy land, and our comfort now muſt be, that we are juſt ſetting foot into it, and going to take a view, not indeed of the holy land in all its priſtine glory; but in the condition the Jew found it, at his return from his captivity, and to felicitate him upon the joyous proſpect, he had now before him, of ſhortly beholding the walls of his old Jeruſalem built again, and the towers of his darling temple riſing Phœnix-like, from its aſhes.

From verſe and dialogue, the compoſition therefore ſeems now returning to downright proſe and narrative, and the ſacred author reſumes the plainneſs and ſimplicity of the primitive life, upon which he firſt projected his ſtory; Job makes his appearance once more, in the circle of his own private family, and withdrawn as it were, from the field of battle, with all the approbation of his faithful ſervices, from the very hand he wiſhed it from, promiſes himſelf a retirement calm and honorable, ſits down the reſigned, meek and ſubmiſſive character, that the prologue had drawn him, and awaits with all humility, the reſtoration of his health and fortunes, which in the dramatic repreſentation, had been engaged to him.

THEN THE LORD TURNED THE CAPTIVITY OF JOB, *when he prayed for his friends: alſo the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had*

had before; then came there unto him all his brethren and all his ſiſters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his houſe: *and they bemoaned him: and comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him; every man alſo gave him a piece of money, and every one an ear-ring of gold. So the Lord bleſſed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thouſand ſheep, and ſix thouſand camels, and a thouſand yoke of oxen, and a thouſand ſhe aſſes; he had alſo ſeven ſons and three daughters*[1]; a glorious reverſe of all his calamities!

Previous to this reverſal of his captivity, were the prayers and the ſacrifices, which God commanded him to offer upon this occaſion, and which in obedience to that command, he went about inſtantly; this is a circumſtance, ſo minutely copied from the parallel behaviour of Hezekiah, when he *turned his face to the wall and prayed*, and to the effect it readily produced, when the prophet told him, *thy tears are ſeen and thy prayers are heard, and behold thou ſhalt recover*, that one would think there had been no avoiding the application of it. But what is ſtill more intereſting in this circumſtance is, that it is the very remarkable one of all, which diſtinguiſhed the Jew at this period; for never was there ſuch a ſpirit of zeal and piety in that people, as they brought back with them from their captivity.

And this has ever been a problem, among the thinking part of mankind, why a nation ſo prone as this, to idolatry, when they had ſo many prophets and a favorite temple of their own, yet ſtanding among them, were not in fact, inclined at all to it, when they had none, no prophets nor any miracles wrought among them, *i. e.* after their return from the Babyloniſh captivity? when they continued ſtedfaſt to the law of Moſes, and adhered with the moſt rigid exactneſs, to both the moral and the ceremonial precepts of their religion; nor can any better account I apprehend, be given of this matter, than that their captivity had done the buſineſs for them, had effectually cured them through a tedious courſe of ſevere diſcipline, which they had undergone, of the very crime, which in its-ſelf and its conſequences, had brought all their calamities upon them, and which, while they were at Babylon, they muſt have ſeen in all its folly and extravagance.

Or perhaps it is, what a learned divine ſuppoſes, "that when once men are firmly perſuaded, either from the experience of what they themſelves have felt, or from the aſſurance of what hath happened to others,

[1] Chap. xlii. 10.

others, that no people can be reduced to ſuch a wretched and forlorn condition, but that the good providence of God may and will, if it ſee fit, come in to their reſcue, and deliver them without hope, and againſt hope; for when this opinion is once fixt in men's minds, it introduces preſently a public face of religion among them, and common endeavours of expreſſing their common truſts and dependance upon God.

Of this the Jews are a very ſignal and inſtructive inſtance, under their ſeveral captivities and diſperſions, where though they were loſt, to all human hopes of recovery, yet having an aſſurance of the known favor and protection of God towards their ſtate, they perſiſted in the ſtrength of it, to wait for and to expect their deliverance: and had at thoſe times, ſuch a true and ſincere ſpirit of piety ſtirring among them, ſuch zeal towards God, ſuch unanimity amongſt themſelves, as they were utter ſtrangers to, upon other occaſions; inſomuch that they who when at home, under the free enjoyment of their temple worſhip, were prone to all manner of idolatry, when ſcattered into the land of idols, where they had the temptation ever near them, and before their eyes, are obſerved never once to have complied with it. And this very principle it is, that ſtill ſupports and animates them, under this their laſt and greateſt diſperſion, and keeps them ſtill rigidly addicted to their rites [m]."

To whichſoever of theſe cauſes the Jew ſtood indebted, for his extraordinary ſpirit of piety, or perhaps to a mixture of both, at this conjuncture, Job very evidently appears, upon the face of his ſtory, to have had the ſame obligations, and to have acted upon the ſelf-ſame principles; worried he had been in a long and tedious debate, with his three perſecutors, had undergone the diſcipline of a wretched captivity, had been told again and again, that it might after all, be in the ſcheme of providence to reſcue him one day, from it, and grew at length to be convinced of ſo comfortable a doctrine; then it was, that the ſpirit of piety began to operate, and tired of a fruitleſs oppoſition, and rivetted in a much more fruitful aſſurance of the good providence of God, he betakes himſelf to the only refuge that was left him, his prayers, and flies once more to the burnt-offerings and ſacrifices, which he had ſo long and ſo totally diſcontinued.

Look but into the book of Ezra, and there is no being at a loſs to ſee, from whence this circumſtance is copied. *Now in the firſt year of Cyrus king of Perſia* (*that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Je-*

[m] Atterbury Sermons. Vol. I. p. 259.

remiah, might be fulfilled) the Lord ſtirred up the ſpirit of Cyrus king of Perſia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it alſo in writing, ſaying, the Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath charged me to build him an houſe at Jeruſalem, which is in Judah; then roſe up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the prieſts and the Levites, with all them whoſe ſpirit God had raiſed to go up, to build the houſe of the Lord which is in Jeruſalem [n]*;—and when the ſeventh month was come, and the children of Iſrael were in their cities, the people gathered themſelves together, as one man to Jeruſalem; then ſtood up Jeſhuah the ſon of Jozadak, and his brethren the prieſts, and Zerubbabel the ſon of Shealtiel and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Iſrael, to offer burnt offerings upon, as it is written in the law of Moſes the man of God; and they ſet the altar upon its baſes, (for fear was upon them becauſe of the people of thoſe countries) and they offered burnt-offerings morning and evening; they kept alſo the feaſt of tabernacles, as it is written, and offered the daily burnt offerings by number, according to the cuſtom, as the duty of every day required; and they afterwards offered the continual burnt-offering, both of the new moon, and of all their feaſts of the Lord, that were conſecrated, and of every one that willingly offered unto the Lord; from the firſt day of the ſeventh month began they to offer burnt-offerings unto the Lord: but the foundation of the temple was not yet laid* [o].

The book of Job opened we may remember, with a grand ſacrifice, and with the grandeſt feaſt of the paſſover, that Iſrael had ſeen ſince the days of king Solomon, and that was Hezekiah's paſſover; and it is now about to cloſe with another of thoſe feaſts, not indeed ſo grand, for that the preſent ſtate of their affairs would not admit: nor yet attended by ſuch numbers, for that again it could not be, by reaſon of the loſs they had ſuffered in the captivity, but more welcome and more joyous than all the feaſts they had ever kept; for no ſooner was the new temple, that deſire of all their hearts, reared, than they ſet about retrieving what had been ſo long diſcontinued, their annual feaſts, and the firſt that preſented in turn, was the feaſt of the paſſover, and thus Ezra deſcribes it; *the children of Iſrael kept the paſſover, upon the fourteenth day of the firſt month, for the prieſts and the Levites were purified together, all of them were pure, and killed the paſſover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the prieſts, and for themſelves; and the children of*

[n] Ezra. i. 1, 5. [o] xi. 1, 6.

Iſrael

Iſrael, which were come again out of the captivity, and all ſuch as had ſeparated themſelves unto them, from the filthineſs of the heathen of the land, to ſeek, the Lord God of Iſrael did eat, and kept the feaſt of unleavened bread ſeven days, for the Lord had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Aſſyria to them, to ſtrengthen their hand in the work of the houſe of God, the God of Iſrael[p].

Job's houſe too was now rebuilt, and that tent of his which the whirl-wind in the prologue, had overſet, pitched once more upon the very ground it ſtood upon, and no ſooner was it prepared for their reception, than we learn that there *came unto him all his brethren, and all his ſiſters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him* IN HIS HOUSE. If we aſk who the gueſts were, Ezra hath informed us, they were the children of the captivity, the children of Iſrael which were come out of the captivity, and their brethren the prieſts and the Levites; if we aſk about his houſe, it was plainly none other than the temple of Jeruſalem.

It will be ſtill more eaſy to comprehend all this, if we conſider only the two decrees of Cyrus and Artaxerxes, upon which, the return of the Jews to their own country, and the rebuilding of the temple ſtood; the decree of Artaxerxes is addreſſed by name, *to all the people of Iſrael*[q], and not to Judah and Benjamin only, and that of Cyrus, *to all the people of the God of Iſrael*[r], i. e. to all that worſhipped God at Jeruſalem, which muſt be underſtood of the ten revolted tribes in the kingdom of Iſrael, as well as of the kingdom of Judah, for the temple was built for both, and both had an equal right to worſhip God there, and therefore Ezra ſent a copy of the king's decree through all Media, where the ten tribes were in captivity, as well as through all Chaldea and Aſſyria, where the Jews were in captivity.

Here again, we meet with the ſeven ſons and the three daughters of Job, a meeting which very juſtly ſurprizes all the commentators, and which, conſidering that they turn out preciſely the ſame number of each ſex, forms a ſtrong preſumption againſt the literal interpretation of this book; but at the ſame time it is a meeting, let me obſerve, that the attentive reader muſt have been prepared for, as well as for the rebuilding of this houſe of Job's, when Eliphaz gives the warning: *He ſhall deliver thee in ſix troubles, yea in ſeven there ſhall no evil touch thee; and thou ſhalt know that thy tabernacle ſhall be in*

[p] Ezra. vi. 19. [q] Ezra. vii. 13. [r] xi. 3.

peace, and thou ſhalt viſit thine houſe and ſhalt not be diſappointed, *thou ſhalt know alſo that thy* children *ſhall be great and thine offſpring as the graſs of the earth* [f]; and Bildad ſpeaks without reſerve upon the point; *If thy* children *have ſinned againſt him, and he have* caſt them away *for their tranſgreſſion, if thou wouldeſt ſeek unto God betimes, and make thy ſupplication to the Almighty, if thou wert pure and upright, ſurely now he would awake for thee, and make the* habitation of thy houſe *proſperous, though thy beginning was ſmall, yet thy latter end ſhould greatly increaſe* [t]; a plain inſinuation, that both his houſe and his children were to make their appearance again.

Should it be thought an exception to this hypotheſis of ours, that the return of the ten tribes, and their uniting again with Judah, are facts by no means clear from hiſtory, that it yet remains a doubt among the learned, whether they ſtill remain in the countries beyond the Euphrates, or reſettled themſelves in their old land: that is a doubt, which I am as little prepared to reſolve, as the other is an exception, which I am not concerned at all to obviate, and therefore leave both the one and the other to their reſpective evidence; it is ſufficient countenance to this account of that matter, that at the time this book was written, or ſuppoſed to be written, the return of the ten tribes, and their reſettlement in their own country, was a thing ſpoken of by the prophets, as certain, though the time when all this ſhould take place, was one of thoſe ſecrets in the breaſt of providence, which may not yet have received its full explanation.

Not but the ſcriptures ſeem to ſpeak of their having returned again, and repreſent the land of Paleſtine, as peopled once more by the Iſraelites of all the tribes, long before the coming of Chriſt [u]; and of one thing there can remain no queſtion, and that is, that after the Aſſyrian captivity, many out of all the ten tribes reſorted to Judah, and fell under its dominion, ſhared the ſame fate with it, in the Babyloniſh captivity, and returned again from thence along with it, and "the decree of Cyrus being a general permiſſion for the return of all the twelve tribes, many families of the other tribes returned to their own country; but all theſe were gathered to Judah, and became one people, and in this ſtate and condition, things continued till the coming of Chriſt, and the laſt deſtruction of that nation by the Roman power [x]."

[f] Ch. v. 10. [t] Ch. viii. 4. [u] Calmet. Diſſertation prefixt to 2 Chron.
[x] Sherlock Diſcourſe, p. 325.

And

And much the ſame kind of anſwer will ſerve to obviate another objection, which it is eaſy to foreſee, againſt the application we have been making occaſionally, of ſeveral paſſages in this book[w], to the temple, and its being built again in at leaſt all its former ſplendor and magnificence; that the fact is againſt us; and I anſwer, ſo is the fact too againſt the prophets, in caſe the deſcriptions they have given of the ſecond temple, are to be confined to either the ſize, the beauty, or the glory of it, for in all theſe, there is no doubt, but the ſecond temple fell far ſhort of the firſt, in how pompous ſoever a manner it had been deſcribed to the Jews, during their captivity, by the prophets.

Where then you will ſay, are we to look for the accompliſhment of ſuch prophecies? In the accompliſhment of Chriſt's church and kingdom, and no where elſe that I know of. Ezekiel of all the prophets, is the moſt minute and graphical in his deſcription of the future temple, and I have a particular reaſon for referring the reader to him; he will there ſee the very plan and model of it, with all its courts, walls, porches, galleries, *&c.* all in their exact dimenſions and proportions[x]; but by the general conſent of interpreters, this viſion ſets forth a model or pattern of a church, far more glorious and ſpiritual, than either the ſecond or even the firſt temple at Jeruſalem, and though conceived in terms that flattered the Jews wiſhes, and ſoothed the moſt darling paſſion at their hearts, had in view the grand object of all prophecy, and at the ſame time that it ſketches out the future temple, upon the out-lines of Solomon's, had a temple and church in ſight, *whoſe maker and builder is God.*

Obſcure therefore as the rebuilding of Job's houſe may ſeem, it is not more ſo, than the prophecies that relate to the rebuilding of the temple; but ſtill there is this difference in the two caſes, that their obſcurity ariſes from ſomething in the nature of them, dark and myſterious, ſomething that demanded time to bring them to light; whereas the obſcurity of this, owes its riſe to a very different conſideration, the addreſs and artifice eſſential to a dramatic performance.

For whatever had been the aſſurances tendered in the progreſs of the *drama*, to Job concerning this grand event, or how magnificently ſoever the three friends had diſplayed the future glory and ſplendor of his houſe, yet when matters come to a concluſion, we

[w] Ch. v. 17. vi. 24. viii. 4. xi. 13. xxii. 23.

[x] Ezek. xl. *&c.*

have

have but bare mention made of it, and are left to collect that in fact it had been rebuilt, from finding his brethren and his ſiſters entertained in it; and all this was but conſiſtent with that ſimplicity of narrative, which the prologue had opened with, and of which it had been a downright violation, if the epilogue had deſcended to particulars; all that we hear of it there is, that it was blown down, and all we can infer about it here is, that it had been built again.

Of a piece with this ſimplicity in the narrative, is the plainneſs of the imagery, under which this grand feaſt of the paſſover kept by the Jews after the dedication of the new temple, is figured; all that we learn about it is, that upon the Lord's turning the captivity of Job, there came unto him all his brethren and his ſiſters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and *did eat bread with him in his houſe*; an amiable picture of primitive hoſpitality, and patriarchal temperance, when as yet luxury had not made its inroad to their tables, nor domeſtic jealouſies and diviſions to their families, when their board was ſpread with the produce of their own induſtry, and their feaſts were hallowed with the piety of their own children and dependants.

And how great was that piety, we may learn from a very ſtrong and affecting expreſſion indeed of it, for amidſt all their joy and congratulation upon the return of their brother, we find they could not help bemoaning him too, upon the evils that had been brought upon him; ſuch a tender interview was likely enough to be attended with all the overflowings of an honeſt heart, and all the conflict of tumultuous grief and joy, this was only natural; but there was ſomething more than nature in this particular caſe, for it was the very caſe we are told, with the Jews at laying the foundation of their new temple. *All the people ſhouted with a great ſhout, when they praiſed the Lord becauſe the foundation of the houſe was laid, but many of the prieſts and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were antient men that had ſeen the firſt houſe, when the foundation of this houſe was laid before their eyes,* wept with a loud voice, and many ſhouted for joy, ſo that the people could not diſcern the noiſe of the ſhout of joy from the noiſe of the weeping of the people [u].

Yet here again, juſt as in the feaſts mentioned in the prologue, the poet has been at ſome pains to throw a veil of other rites and

[u] Ezr. iii. 8.

cuſtoms, over the whole jewiſh feſtival ceremonial, and in order to keep it out of ſight the more effectually, has given theſe feaſts a caſt of heathen manners, and left it therefore as he deſigned, *in æquilibrio*, for the reader to exerciſe his talents and judgment upon. Nothing was there ſo common in the heathen world, as their feaſts at the dedication of their public buildings, not of their temples only, but of their theatres, ſchools, libraries, courts, aqueducts and all manner of edifices, that were to be conſecrated as it were, to the public ſervice; upon theſe occaſions great was the concourſe of people, and of courſe the jollity in their entertainments.

Virgil, upon the very firſt landing of Eneas in Italy, makes the trojan troops begin their jollity, upon the very rumor in the camp, that now the time was come, when they ſhould go to work upon the walls of their new city.

Diditur hic ſubito Trojana per agmina rumor
Adveniſſe diem, quo debita mœnia condant.
Certatim inſtaurant epulas, atque omine magno
Crateras læti ſtatuunt et vina coronant [w].

Soon through the camp the joyful rumor flew,
The time was come their city to renew.
Then ev'ry brow with chearful green is crown'd,
The feaſts are doubled and the bowls go round.

an impatience, and a tumultuous kind of joy, exactly reſembling theſe of the returned Jew, upon ſo rapturous a proſpect.

Nor in this inſtance only is it, where the poet makes uſe of this piece of artifice, but the very next circumſtance that is mentioned, is perhaps the moſt glaring proof of it, at the ſame time that it is much the moſt beautiful piece of allegory, in the whole poem; and that is, that *Every one gave him a piece of money, and every one an ear-ring of gold* [x]. The learned Schultens, Dr. Grey informs us, takes the former of theſe for a *ſymbol* of Job's faith and virtue, and the latter, for the ornaments of honor and glory [y], and ſo far I agree

[w] Virgil. Æn. vii.

[x] Ch. xl. 11.

[y] Videntur hæc ea Donaria, *Honoraria* quædam miro conſenſu ſoluta, ad culpam proditi officii quodammodo expiandam, & fidelius obſequium communi *teſſera* obſignandum;—Staterem aureum commentator noſter capit pro *ſymbolo* virtutis & fidei, quæ inſtar auri, e fornace emicuiſſet, atque monilia aurea refert ad ornamenta honoris et gloriæ, quibus præfulgere meruiſſet fortiſſimus miſeriarum victor. Grey in loc.

with

with them both, that ſymbols they were, yet not of either faith or virtue, but the old ſymbols of hoſpitality, ſuch as were preſented by perſons of diſtinction upon their viſits, to be repoſited among their treaſures, as a token of friendſhip in their reſpective families [z].

Homer introduces Diomede recounting to Glaucus, the gifts which their anceſtors had interchanged.

Η ῥα νυ μοι Ξεινος πατρωιος ἐσσι παλαιος,
Οινευς γαρ ποτε διος ἀμυμονα Βελλεροφοντα
Ξεινισσ' ἐν μεγαροισιν, ἐεικοσι ἡματ' ἐρυξας.
Οι δε και ἀλληλοισι πορον Ξεινηια καλα.
Οινευς μεν ζωστηρα διδε φοινικι φαεινον,
Βελλεροφοντες δε χρυσεον δεπας ἀμφικυπελλον,
Και μεν ἐγων καλελειπον ἰων ἐν δωμασ' ἐμοισι [z].

Know chief, our grandſires have been gueſts of old,
Oeneus the ſtrong, Bellerophon the bold.
Our antient ſeat his honored preſence grac'd,
Where twenty days in genial rites he paſs'd:
The parting heroes mutual preſents left,
A golden goblet was thy grandſire's gift.
Oeneus a belt of matchleſs work beſtow'd,
That rich with Tyrian dye refulgent glow'd.

Such were the tokens of friendſhip and hoſpitality in the heathen world, and that the jewiſh fell not ſhort of them, upon this viſit of theirs to their old friend and brother, the free-will offerings which were made upon this occaſion, are an ample proof; for Ezra's account of them is, *that the chief of the fathers, when they came to the houſe of the Lord which is at Jeruſalem, offered freely for the houſe of God to ſet it up in its place: they gave after their ability, unto the treaſure of the work threeſcore and one thouſand drams of gold, and five thouſand pounds of ſilver, and one hundred prieſts garments* [a]. An amazing offering indeed, conſidering they were but juſt come out of their captivity, amounting in the whole to no leſs a ſum than ſeven-

[z] Συμβολα. Ξεινια. δωρα Ξενικα. κειμηλια εις ἀναμνησιν παλαιας φιλιας τοις πιστοτοις. Potter's Arch. Gr. Vol. II. p. 417. Homer. Iliad. VI. See Euſtathius's note. and Potter's Arch. Gr. Ibid. [a] Ezra. ii. 68.

ty

ty five thouſand five hundred pounds ſtirling, beſides the veſtments [b].

Yet great as theſe were, greater ſtill was what he received at the hands of God, for the Lord bleſſed the latter end of Job more than the beginning, gave him twice as much as he had before, and doubled to him the numbers of his herds and flocks of every kind; this was doing juſtice again to that plan, the poet had adopted at the beginning, of the primitive life, and of the riches and poſſeſſions of the old world; and it was purſuing at the ſame time, his allegory with the utmoſt faithfulneſs; for whatever loſs we may be at, in accounting for the meaning of the words, certain it is that the poet has ſaid no more of Job, than God promiſed to the Jews by the mouth of their prophets, *To day I declare I will return double unto thee* [c]; and again; *For your ſhame, ye ſhall have double, and for confuſion, they ſhall rejoice in their portion, therefore in the land they ſhall poſſeſs their double, everlaſting joy ſhall be unto them* [d].

And in this proportion exactly, the Lord increaſed the years, as he had done the fortunes of Job, for *after this, Job lived an hundred and forty years, and ſaw his ſons and his ſons ſons, even four generations, ſo Job died being old and full of days.* The queſtion the Rabbins, and indeed ſome of the fathers, aſk themſelves upon this occaſion is, how old, Job muſt have been at the time he began his afflictions? and with all the formality of an arithmetical problem, they fix it to his LXX^th^ year, becauſe that is juſt half CXL [e], a diſcovery, juſt as ingenious as it is uſeful, and leaves the main point, exactly where it found it.

A calculation of much the ſame kind, copied it ſeems with great faithfulneſs from ſome of the antients, has been taken up by a late learned allegoriſt, whoſe account of the matter upon the whole, is this, that Job lived LXX years in proſperity, and that God in reward of his ſufferings, as he bleſſed him with a double increaſe of his ſubſtance, doubled likewiſe the number of his years, ſo that his whole life was equal to thrice the then age of man [f]; putting I take for granted, the age of man at LXX, as it is ſuppoſed to have ſtood in Solomon's time.

Now to the one or the other of theſe accounts, I have no objection in point of numbers, for LXX will be the half of CXL, and CXL will be

[b] Prid. Con. Vol. I. p. 110. Arbuthnot on Coins, p. 208. [c] Zech. ix. 12.
[d] Iſai. lxi. 7. [e] Communiter Hebræi, & in patribus plurimi Jobum paſſum fuiſſe anno ætatis ſuæ LXX ſtatuunt; ratio eſt, a duplicatis vitæ annis poſt reſtitutionem, qui ſi fuere CXL, reliquum eſt, ut illorum partem dimidiam ſeu annos LXX impleverit. Fr. Spanh. Hiſt. Job 289. [f] Worthington's Diſs. p. 493. Notes.

twice LXX as long as the world ſtands; but how the one or the other queſtion comes to be aſkt at all, upon the face of this ſtory, is to me aſtoniſhing. It was natural indeed enough to put the queſtion, "of how long continuance were the ſufferings of Job?" becauſe this aroſe immediately out of the ſtory its-ſelf, where the difference between all his poſſeſſions, his ſheep and his camels, before and after them, are aſſigned, and the concluſion was to be come at upon the ſame principles; for if all theſe were doubled to him at his return from his captivity, it would be juſt as eaſy to know how many years he ſuffered, as how many ſheep or camels he had; if he had fourteen thouſand ſheep now, we might have learnt without having been told it, that he had ſeven thouſand before, juſt as we may now learn, that if he lived CXL years in proſperity, he muſt have lived LXX in adverſity; the very term of the Babyloniſh captivity[g].

And here I could very willingly take leave of the epilogue, were there not remaining one more thing to be conſidered in it, and that is, Job's giving his three daughters *inheritance among their brethren*, a diſpoſition, which gives infinite offence to the whole tribe of criticks upon this paſſage, and forms it ſeems, as ſtrong a preſumption againſt the books being written upon the jewiſh plan, the very plan we have been all along contending for, as their appearing contrary to the accuſtomed reſerve of their ſex, at the feaſts mentioned in the prologue[h].

To do the objection juſtice, it goes upon much the ſame principles, and concludes with much the ſame force as the other; there was a law of Moſes's, that limited the deſcent of inheritance to their males, and excluded the females, unleſs by default: and there was a cuſtom among the Jews, that their females were not admitted to their entertainments: and therefore the book of Job, which repreſents the females, ſharing alike with their brethren in them both, cannot be written upon the jewiſh plan, *i. e.* have any thing to do with jewiſh hiſtory; a concluſion right enough, ſuppoſing the book to be what it is not, hiſtorical, but much too ſerious and formal, to be in-

[g] Παῖλα διπλα μιτα την πειραν λαμβανει, δηλον ὁτι ᾗ τα ἑτη. ἔζησε δε μιτα την πληγην ἑτη ἑβδομηκοντα, ων το ἡμισυ ὀγδοηκοντα πεντε. Olympiod. in Caten. pat.

[h] Communis filiabus fuit hæreditas inter fratres, ſeu æqualis portio cum fratribus. Hebreorum jure, ubi eſſet maſcula proles jus ſucceſſionis ad filios ſolos reſtrictum fuit. Num. xxvii. 8.—Et hujus intuitu factum eſt, ut ſcriptor hiſtoriæ Jobi æqualis iſtius diſtributionis inter filios filiaſque exortim meminerit. ſiquidem, quicunque ille tandem, Hebræus fuit, Moſe poſterior, latâ jam, quo hæc ſcriberet tempore, de ſucceſſione maſculorum, lege, a quâ quia diverſum fuit Jobi factum, lege iſtâ utpote anterius, in aliâ etiam gente quam Hebræâ. Fred. Spanh. Hiſt. Job p. 424.

ferred from what it is, a dramatic performance, where it will be difficult to define preciſely, how far the poet is at liberty to vary in circumſtances like theſe, which have no immediate connection with the main drift of his allegory, nor interfere at all, with the truth of that part of hiſtory which is the ſubject of it.

Not but the ſacred author had at the very firſt ſetting out, taken care to guard againſt ſuch puny exceptions as theſe, and paid indeed a more ſcrupulous regard to ſo very minute a circumſtance, than it ſeems at firſt ſight to have deſerved; for Job's houſe is made to *fall upon the young men* only, and the meſſenger ſays expreſſly *they are dead*, but we hear of no calamity of this kind having befallen his daughters, nor indeed any thing more at all of them, till they emerge in the epilogue; now there was no law that I know of, in the hebrew code, that excluded the daughters from inheriting in default of ſons, but there was a determination of God himſelf full to the point, in the caſe of the daughters of Zelophead the ſon of Hepher, *If a man die and have no ſon, then ye ſhall cauſe his inheritance to paſs unto his daughter, &c. and this ſhall be unto the children of Iſrael a ſtatute of judgment, as the Lord commanded Moſes*[i].

This perhaps may help towards reſolving another querie, which Pineda, Le Clerc and other commentators have ſtarted upon this occaſion, why the names of the three daughters are mentioned, and not of the ſeven ſons[k]? for it had been an impropriety perhaps, for the poet to have named ſeven perſons, who upon the face of the ſtory were dead, and appear again no otherwiſe in the epilogue, than as it were in the ſhade, but juſt ſpoken of and dropt again that inſtant; whereas the three daughters make their appearance upon the ſtage in perſon, have fictitious names given them, borrowed it is more than probable, from ſomething in the etymology of them, relative to this grand event[l], and have a public teſtimony born to them, that *in all the land were no women found* more fair, the LXX render ΙΑΡΟΤ, βελτιους, more good, or more virtuous, *than the daughters of Job.*

[i] Numb. xxvii. 11. [k] Cur ſuppreſſis filiorum nominibus, filiarum illa appoſita ſunt, ad myſterium confugiunt veteres mire ludentes in etymis Jemimæ, Reteiæ, et Keranhappuch, ſive Dianæ vel *diei Caſſiæ*, & *Cornu-ſtibii*, &c. Schultens in loc. Quæritur cur ſunt filiorum nomina memorata, non filiarum; cujus rei ratio reddi non poteſt, niſi forte illuſtriores fuere filiæ. Cler in loc.

[l] Alii ſymbolicas has faciunt appellationes, quibus familiæ ſuæ redivivam *lucem, famam* & *gloriam* repreſentatam voluerit fortunatiſſimus pater. Erud. de Pineda longè lateque tanquam per amœna vireta his ſpatiatus. Schultens in loc. And this I apprehend to be the true reſolution of the caſe.

But I lay no ſtreſs at all upon this conjecture, and if after all, the reader expect ſome ſatisfaction with regard to the teſtimony here given, of either the ſuperior beauty, or the ſuperior virtue of theſe three daughters, I know of no account ſo happy, and therefore ſo likely to give him all the ſatisfaction he can want in both, than that of the learned author of the *divine Legation* &c. But now ſays he, all this obſcurity is cleared up, and the paſſage is ſeen in its native beauty; it was the writer's deſign to recommend the daughters of Iſrael, as the moſt deſirable parties, and to commemorate the reformation now made amongſt the people, when they put away their ſtrange wives, and took an oath to ſhare the holy inheritance for the future, only with the daughters of Iſrael. A conjecture which I muſt obſerve, agrees alike with the date the learned author gives this book, and with what I conceive to be the ſubject of the whole epilogue, the return of the Jews to their own land[m].

Upon this view of both the epilogue and the prologue, let me juſt treſpaſs upon the reader with this ſingle obſervation, that whatever we conceive of the difference between thoſe and the intermediate part, in point of ſtile, and call therefore the one verſe and the other proſe, yet if all the ſublimity of figures and allegory, joined to all the elegance of deſcription, and to all the delicacy of fancy and imagery, can form any preſumption of their being poetical, both the prologue and the epilogue have a claim to be conſidered in this light. I freely confeſs myſelf however, unequal to the taſk of making good this point from the original, and recommend it therefore to thoſe, whoſe learned labors upon this book, and ſuperior abilities in this particular province, point out for ſuch an undertaking.

Though opportunities therefore almoſt infinite, offered in the courſe of the examination of the *drama*, of pointing out parallel paſſages in the heathen poets, I have induſtriouſly avoided it there, in order to ſtand clear of the imputation of pedantry, in a part which all the world is agreed, is poetical: and confined my quotations of that ſort, to the prologue only and the epilogue, in order to juſtify the ſuſpicion now inſinuated, that they are by the caſt of both the figures and ſentiment, by no means downright proſe, whatever in the opinion of the learned, may be the real caſe with them.

All the antient greek tragedians introduce their *dramas* with a prologue, and conclude them with an epilogue, in verſe, the diſpoſi-

[m] Diſ. Leg. Vol. II. p. 522.

tions made for the conduct of the whole *drama* are generally ſpeaking, the ſubject of the one, and the machines the buſineſs of the other; and of this the prologue and the epilogue in the book under examination, are a perfect, at the ſame time that they are the oldeſt pattern; the one opens with a grand council in heaven, and the other ſhuts with God in a machine, and diſplays the determinations of providence upon this great event, *out of the whirlwind.*

But there is no mentioning all this *apparatus* in them both, without obſerving that there is a pſalm, from which whether the ſacred author borrowed his materials or not, is not eaſy to decide, but which plainly contains the ſelf ſame materials, has all the ſame ſolemnity of *apparatus*, and what is more, introduces the deity in the ſelf-ſame machine, and therefore it is more than probable, relates to the very ſame ſtory, and was one of thoſe pſalms, which ſome or other of the jewiſh pſalmodiſts compoſed in the Babyloniſh captivity.

The pſalm I mean, and which has been already touched upon, is the L^th^, intitled a pſalm LEASAP, of Aſaph, or in imitation of Aſaph, and which is prefaced by biſhop Patrick with an obſervation, that gives good light into what was moſt probably, the buſineſs of it; that the pſalmiſt thereby awakens the Jews to a ſerious conſideration of the danger they were in, repreſenting God as the ſupreme judge of the world, coming in an amazing manner to call them all to a ſtrict account, and to take a ſevere vengeance upon them unleſs they amended; and this began to come upon them by Sennacherib, whom God threatned to ſend againſt this hypocritical nation, and was executed upon their city by Nebuchadnezzar, when he deſtroyed Jeruſalem and the temple; the pſalmiſt therefore here repreſents the divine majeſty, like to a king coming out of his palace, attended by his miniſters, with the enſigns of terror carried before him, and iſſuing out his orders to ſummon all his ſubjects to appear at his tribunal [m].

The reader will pardon my tranſcribing it into this work, at full length, when he is told, that I conceive it to be the book of Job in miniature, conſidered as to the poetical machinery of it, and thus it ſtands. " The Lord, even the moſt mighty God hath ſpoken, and " called the world from the riſing up of the ſun, unto the going " down thereof. Out of Sion hath God appeared in perfect beauty. " Our God ſhall come, and ſhall not keep ſilence; there ſhall go

[m] Patr. Par. in loc. *Argument.*

" before

" before him a conſuming fire, and a mighty tempeſt ſhall be ſtir-
" red up round about him. He ſhall call the heaven from above,
" and the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my ſaints
" together unto me, thoſe that have made a covenant with me
" with ſacrifice. And the heavens ſhall declare his righteouſneſs,
" for God is judge himſelf. Hear, O my people, and I will ſpeak,
" I myſelf will teſtify againſt thee, O Iſrael; for I am God, even
" thy God. I will not reprove thee becauſe of thy ſacrifices, or for
" thy burnt-offerings, becauſe they were not alway before me. I
" will take no bullock out of thine houſe, nor he-goat out of
" thy folds. For all the beaſts of the foreſt are mine, and ſo are
" the cattle upon a thouſand hills. I know all the fowls upon the
" mountains, and the wild beaſts of the field are in my ſight. If I
" be hungry, I will not tell thee, for the whole world is mine, and
" all that is therein. Thinkeſt thou that I will eat bulls fleſh, and
" drink the blood of goats? Offer unto God thankſgiving, and
" pay thy vows unto the moſt Higheſt. And call upon me in the
" time of trouble, ſo will I hear thee, and thou ſhalt praiſe me.
" But unto the ungodly ſaid God; why doſt thou preach my laws,
" and takeſt my covenant in thy mouth; whereas thou hateſt to be
" reformed, and haſt caſt my words behind thee? When thou
" ſaweſt a thief, thou conſentedſt unto him, and haſt been partaker
" with the adulterers. Thou haſt let thy mouth ſpeak wickedneſs,
" and with thy tongue thou haſt ſet forth deceit. Thou ſatteſt and
" ſpakeſt againſt thy brother, yea and haſt ſlandered thine own
" mother's ſon. Theſe things haſt thou done, and I held my tongue,
" and thou thoughteſt wickedly, that I am even ſuch a one as
" thyſelf; but I will reprove thee, and ſet before thee the things
" that thou haſt done. O conſider this, ye that forget God, leſt I
" pluck you away, and there be none to deliver you. Whoſo of-
" fereth me thanks and praiſe, he honoureth me, and to him that
" ordereth his converſation right, will I ſhew the ſalvation of
" God."

I will not purſue this point any farther, as it is high time for me to conclude what I had to offer upon the ſubject, being perſuaded, if I do not flatter myſelf moſt egregiouſly, that I have ſufficiently made good, what I firſt undertook to prove, that it is the ſeed of Abraham, and the poſterity of Jacob in particular, that is the foundation of the whole poem; that it is ſtill more particularly, the tribe and kingdom of Judah, that is ſhadowed in the character of Job; that

that the very extraordinary circumſtances this kingdom labored under, at this critical period, the Babyloniſh captivity, are the groundwork of the allegory; and that the reſtoration of it in the perſon of Job, is the grand object and argument of the poem.

I ſhall cloſe this part therefore, with a picture of PATIENCE, from Aurelius Prudentius, which I have oft admired, with Job in her retinue, one of the moſt ſerene compoſed figures, that can well be drawn; it is where PATIENCE triumphs over ANGER.

Quam ſuper aſſiſtens Patientia, vicimus, inquit,
Exultans vitium, ſolitâ virtute, ſine ullo
Sanguinis et vitæ diſcrimine. lex habet iſtud
Noſtra genus belli.
Hæc effata ſecat medias impune cohortes
Egregio comitata viro; nam proximus ÏOB
Hæſerat invictæ media inter tela miniſtræ
Fronte ſeverus adhuc, & multo vulnere anhelus.
Sed jam clauſa truci ſubridens ulcera vultu,
Perque cicatricum numerum ſudata recenſens
Millia pugnarum, ſua præmia, dedecus hoſti,
Illum Diva jubet tandem requieſcere ab omni
Armorum ſtrepitu, captis & perdita quæque
Multiplicare opibus, nec jam peritura referre [n].

We've conquer'd then the gentle Goddeſs cry'd—
We've triumph'd o'er the proud exulting tyrant,
Guiltleſs of bloodſhed, and without a blow.
This is our law of arms—
He ſaid—and now ſecurely wings her way
Thro' the embattled ranks, while dauntleſs Job
Attends his heroine——Penſively ſerene
He moves, and mark'd with many a glorious wound:
But on them all he now ſeverely ſmiles,
And counting o'er th' innumerable ſcars,
Tells his own honors and the foes reproach.
Him now the Goddeſs frees from every trial
Of war or fortune——all his former ſtore
Doubles, and bids him think of loſs no more.

[n] Aur. Prudent. Pſycom. p. 170.

CON-

CONCLUSION.

EARLIER therefore than this period, even though we ſuppoſe it conceived in the ſpirit of prophecy, I cannot prevail upon myſelf to think, that the book of Job was written, and much leſs, that it is the oldeſt and the moſt perfect compoſition of the poetical kind, extant; becauſe I am perſuaded, that the bleſſing of Jacob. Gen. xlix. The bleſſing of Moſes. Deut. xxxiii. The ſong of Moſes. Exod. xv. The prophecy of Balaam. Numb. xxxiii. The ſong of Deborah. Judg. v. The prayer of Hannah. 1 Sam. ii. The lamentation of David over Saul and Jonathan. 2 Sam. i. The laſt words of David. 2 Sam. xxiii. are all of them older, and when they come to make their appearance in their proper metre, which agreeably to the wiſhes of the learned world, they are likely to do ſhortly, will be found each in its proper kind, as perfect; eſpecially if we may judge of the reſt, from the ſucceſs of a late experiment upon the laſt words of David [a].

The ſubject, a learned author well obſerves, was very fit for that preciſe time; for by propoſing to view a great and good man, ſtruggling under the weight of calamities, and bearing them with patience, it taught the Jews either ſingly, or collectively as a people, what was their duty under hardſhips brought upon themſelves, by their ſins and rebellion againſt God. If Job on account of his virtues, was reſtored to his former floriſhing condition, what was it but to keep alive their hopes, that agreeably to the prediction of their prophets, they ſhould upon their repentance, be reſtored to their own land? a point, that ſeems to be inculcated with great addreſs, in this book. No wonder then, that this is called Job's captivity, when the writer had his eyes ſo ſtrongly fixt on that of his country and himſelf [b].

Yet conſidered in the dramatic view, I know not if both its ſuperior age and excellence may not be pronounced with ſafety, unleſs we could be ſure that *the Canticles*, a paſtoral drama, and a beautiful one too, is Solomon's. Vitringa indeed has pointed out ſeveral little dramatic interludes, ſcattered here and there throughout the

[a] The laſt words of David, divided according to the metre. By R. Grey, D. D. London. 1748.

[b] Coſtard's Obſervations on Job p. 29.

whole

whole prophecy of Iſaiah, and the book of *the Lamentations*, whether penned by Jeremiah or ſome other prophet, is plainly of the ſame caſt, but theſe are all of them, ſketches rather than finiſhed drawings, and dramas only in miniature.

To give the reader an idea of this kind of drama, I have ſelected from the learned critick a particular one, to which, becauſe it has been already touched upon in theſe ſheets, and ſome uſe has been made of it, as well regarding the ſtructure of the book under enquiry, as the allegory it carries with it, I give the preference. It is that parable, for ſo the prophet ſtiles it, as Job does the part he acts, where the downfal of the king of Babylon is painted under all the imagery of the infernal regions, and the ghoſts of deceaſed tyrants are repreſented, as riſing out of their graves to meet him? *How hath the oppreſſor ceaſed, the golden city ceaſed? the Lord hath broken the ſtaff of the wicked, and the ſceptre of the rulers; he who ſmote the people in wrath with a continual ſtroke, he that ruled the nations in anger is perſecuted and none hindereth; the whole earth is at reſt and is quiet, they break forth into ſinging* [c].

This the learned critick conſiders as the firſt ſcene of the drama, where the prophet introduces ſeveral perſons appearing as it were, upon the ſtage, and in a popular kind of an harangue, giving each his own proper ſentiments upon ſo very extraordinary an event, as the ſudden downfal of their king, and congratulating one another, upon the joyous proſpect, of being now delivered from all that tyranny and oppreſſion, he had ſo long exerciſed over them. The ſecond ſcene he marks out at the viii[th] verſe, *yea the fir-trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon ſaying, ſince thou art laid down, no feller is come amongſt us*; under the names of the fir-trees and the cedars of Libanus, he ſuppoſes another ſet of perſons introduced, to bear their teſtimony too to the public joy, ſuch as the kings and princes, and the rulers of provinces then vaſſals of the vaſt babyloniſh monarchy.

Scene the third he fixes at the ix[th] verſe; *Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming, it ſtirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth, it hath raiſed up from their thrones all the kings of the nations; all they ſhall ſpeak and ſay unto thee, art thou alſo become weak as well as we, art thou become like unto us? thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noiſe of thy viols,*

[c] Iſai. xiv. 4.

the worm is ſpread under thee, and the worms cover thee. Here ſays he, the prophet in this dramatic repreſentation of his, makes hell to raiſe up the ghoſts of kings and princes long dead, to go and meet the king of Babylon, and congratulate him upon his ſafe arrival in the court of Pluto, and the regions of the dead.

Scene the fourth and laſt, for it is but a drama of a ſingle act, he opens at verſe the xii^th^, and cloſes at the xxi^th^ verſe, *How art thou fallen from heaven O LUCIFER, SON OF THE MORNING, how art thou cut down to the ground, which didſt weaken the nations? —Prepare ſlaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers, that they do not riſe to poſſeſs the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities.* This again the learned critick ſuppoſes to be the epilogue, or rather a grand chorus, with which indeed the antient drama generally concluded, of Jews rejoicing and exulting upon ſo happy an event as this, reproaching him with all his former treatment of them, and triumphing upon ſeeing all that deſtruction he had brought upon them, now fallen upon his own head.

There is ſomething in truth, that looks dramatic, in this diſpoſition of the parable, nor is it without its pagan materials any more than the book of Job; but whether the criticks in that art would call it a drama I much queſtion, for the rounding it with a chorus at the concluſion, was an invention of the greek tragedians, when the ſtage was improved to its great perfection, and had retrenched all that ſuperfluity of the chorus, with which the firſt tragedy abounded, or of which indeed it rather entirely conſiſted.

We have ſcarce however materials enough at this diſtance, to form any tolerable judgment upon, of the hebrew drama, and can hardly therefore pronounce upon this with ſufficient certainty. There is a treatiſe profeſſedly on this ſubject, written by Father Menetriere, a jeſuit, who appears to me a maſter of it, and treats the old drama upon the footing of muſical repreſentations, ſomething in the nature of the italian opera; for beſides their concerts in their ſeveral choirs for their holy ceremonies, he tells us they had a recitative muſick for their repreſentations which were either copied out of ſcripture ſtory, or elſe compoſed upon ſome extraordinary occaſions, that the voices were accompanied with muſical inſtruments, and the performance exhibited by actors[d].

Thus

[d] Des Repreſentations en Muſique anciennes et modernes. p. 8. I have ſometimes thought, that the *Oratorio*, or ſacred drama, as it is now performed upon the engliſh ſtage, comes nearer the old ſcripture drama, than the opera upon the italian ſtages.

About

Thus ſays he, David who firſt inſtituted the chanters in the choir of the temple, was a king, a prophet, a poet and a muſician; the book of *Kings* informs us, that he ſung hymns and canticles to God, as a thankſgiving for the victories he had obtained, and for the bleſſings he had received; his pſalms are ſo many poems, which he accompanied with the muſick of his harp. In ſome of them may be obſerved the characteriſticks of the dramatic poetry, that is to ſay, of acting or repreſentation; for the greek word denotes *action*, and is the ſame thing as the name *opera*, which the Italians have given to their muſical repreſentations, becauſe what we now call actors, the antients gave the name to them of *operantes* or *dramatis perſonæ*; ſo in the pſalms, David ſpeaks ſometimes to God, and ſometimes, it is God that ſpeaks to him; he ſpeaks to himſelf; he ſpeaks to the Jews; he makes them ſpeak to God; and one to another relates the miracles of God; laſtly this prophet prays, threatens, commands, exhorts, bewails, demands, gives thanks, and expreſſes at different times, all the affections of the ſoul, which it is the buſineſs of dramatic poetry to repreſent.

To look therefore thus high, for a drama finiſhed according to the preciſe rules of art, as laid down by the great maſters of the athenian ſtages, would be a piece of curioſity moſt likely to go unſatisfied; all that we can expect to come at, in this infant crude ſtate of it, is to trace out a general reſemblance to compoſitions confeſſedly dramatic, and waving the accuracy or critical notion of the drama, to obſerve if after all, there be not ſomething ſcenical in ſuch repreſentations, and that in order to convey any tolerable idea of the purport of them, it be not neceſſary firſt to ſuppoſe them exhibited in action, or compoſed at leaſt in ſome ſuch manner, as repreſentations thus exhibited, were wont to be.

In this view of them, thoſe little interludes ſcattered throughout the prophet, may very well I conceive, be conſidered in the light our critick places them; for the prophets like the old philoſophers, finding it impoſſible for them to form mankind, ſuch as they would have them, by precept, had recourſe to another expedient, and what they could not inculcate with any ſucceſs, by reaſon and reproof, they endeavoured to imprint by ſcenical repreſentations, becauſe theſe

About three years ago, we had an *Oratorio* called Judas Machabeus, introduced, with great applauſe; it is of the allegorical ſpecies of ſacred drama, and though the characters and hiſtory of it, are all of them jewiſh, yet it was thought no improper ſubject for a britiſh audience at a very critical juncture, and was received accordingly as the beſt judged theatrical entertainment, that was exhibited upon the late rebellion.

they ſoon found, had eaſy admiſſion to the mind through the ſenſes, and being conveyed in obvious images and familiar language, made their way directly to the heart, and became the more laſting and inſtructive impreſſions, only by their being the moſt agreeable ones.

Hence it is, that the author juſt mentioned concludes the book of Job to be a compoſition, or rather a muſical repreſentation of this ſort, becauſe ſays he, the antient tragedy was invented for no other end, than to incline men to compaſſion and to fear, or rather, to prepare them againſt the diſaſters that thoſe two paſſions are apt to create in the world; and upon this principle, he ſeems to fall in with the old opinion, that it was written by Moſes, by way of conſolation to the Jews in the Egyptian bondage, which however upon the general reaſoning of a captivity and a deliverance, proceeds upon juſt the ſame grounds, and would be attended with juſt the ſame effect, if we ſuppoſe it written for the conſolation of the Jews, in the Babyloniſh captivity.

But there is one more obſervation of his, and which indeed he makes in common with moſt of the enquirers into this book [f], that deſerves ſome farther conſideration; and that is, where ſpeaking of the ſtile and ſtructure of this performance, which he either miſtakes for an epic poem, or confounds the epick and the drama in his general theory of muſical repreſentations, he remarks, that the dialogue between God and Satan, which is the beginning of the narrative, is a poetical invention, which takes nothing he thinks, from the truth of the ſtory, but ſerves only to make it the more agreeable [g].

Now though I ſhould hardly have ventured to pronounce upon the book being dramatical, from this ſingle circumſtance of the conference between God and Satan, becauſe a conference between them carries nothing in the idea of it, at all improbable, or unſcriptural, yet upon full conviction of the reſt, being dramatical, I think

[f] Tout ceci n'eſt qu'une eſpece de parabole, on l'on repreſente Dieu comme une monarque, qui gouverne l'univers avec une autorité ſouveraine. Les Anges ſont comme ſes miniſtres, et les exécuteurs de ſez volontez, lorsqu'il s'agit de ſignaler ſa puiſſance & ſa bonté. Les Démons ſont comme des miniſtres d'un autre genre, qui ne demandent que le trouble, le deſordre, la confuſion; qui ne cherchent qu'a nuire, & exercer leur rage contre les hommes, qu'a les perdre, qu'a les engager dans le pêchè; mais de telle maniere, qu'ils ne peuvent rien faire, ſans un ordre, ou permiſſion expreſſe du tout-puiſſant. Calmet. in loc. Ita ſolet ſcriptura ad populum rudem loqui, quotieſcunque de Deo, aut angelis aut Satana illorumque actionibus ſermo eſt. Ita picturæ ſimiles in viſionibus myſticis Jacobi Gen. xxviii. 2 Reg. xxii. Eſai. vi. Zech. iii. Apoc. xii. Matt. xii. 43. &c. Le Clerc in loc. Sent. de quelques. Theol. Holl. p. 179. Codurc. præf. ad Job.

[g] Repr. en Muſ. anc. & mod. p. 13.

there can be no great harm in concluding, that this is ſo too; indeed it is conceived in language, and diſpoſed in order ſo exactly ſcenical; the converſation is ſo extremely familiar; the intrigue on Satan's ſide ſo artful, and all his addreſs ſo much in character; the attendance of the angels again, at the throne of God, to give as it were, an account of their miniſtry here on earth, and the commiſſion at length indulged to Satan, to perſecute Job, which in fact is one of the hinges upon which the machinery of the poem turns, are ſo many preſumptions of ſomething of poetical fiction in this caſe, and the reſult of this conference is ſo eſſentially interwoven with the whole plot of the drama, that it muſt ſtand or fall with it.

Still when we call it a poetical fiction, no one I ſuppoſe is ſo abſurd as to imagine, that either the miniſtry of good angels, or the agency of evil ſpirits, or yet the wiles of the devil, are poetical fictions, for the truth of all theſe doctrines muſt firſt be ſuppoſed, to give a fiction like this, even the look of probability, and the beauty and propriety of the whole figure depends entirely upon the ſuppoſed truth of the letter; thus when we ſay that the book of Job is a poetical fiction, no one in his ſenſes would argue, that therefore there was never any ſuch perſon as Job, for the exiſtence of ſuch a perſon is implied in the very terms, and all that is meant by the poſition, is that in the ſhape and ſtructure the book appears in, it is a poetical fiction [h].

Milton has preſented a deſcription of the guardian angels of paradiſe, returning into heaven to approve their vigilance, and their obſerving the devil's having ſtolen entrance among them, copied for ought I ſee to the contrary, from this very deſcription in Job.

> Up into heaven from paradiſe in haſte
> Th' angelic guards aſcended, mute and ſad
> For man: (for of his ſtate by this they knew)
> Much wondring how the ſubtle fiend had ſtolen
> Entrance unſeen.
> About the new arrived, in multitudes
> Th' ethereal people ran, to hear and know

[h] Though the perſon of Job and the ſubſtance of his hiſtory have in this manner been allowed to have been real, yet it cannot be denied I think, that the whole as we have it, hath been heightened and ornamented by fancy and poetry; that Satan really acted the part aſſigned him at the beginning, and that the deity appeared and ſpoke at the concluſion, will hardly be believed by any one. Caſtard. Obſerv. on Job. p. 17.

[i] Paradiſe loſt. Book xx.

How

How all befell: they towards the throne ſupreme
Accountable made haſte, to make appear
With righteous plea their utmoſt vigilance,
And eaſily approved [i].

If there be any propriety or beauty either, in this deſcription, it owes it all to the doctrine of the angelic miniſtry; if there were no ſuch beings as guardian angels, the imagery is ſo far from being beautiful, that it is falſe, and if there were, ſtill in the place we find it in, it is a poetical fiction.

And much the ſame is to be ſaid of the conference between God and Satan, as it is drawn in the book under examination; for beſides the generally received doctrine of the angelic miniſtry, which indeed the perſonal appearance of angels to Abraham, Iſaac and Jacob, to Lot and other holy men, ſufficiently juſtified, there was this additional conſideration, that at the very time of the captivity, it was become the catholic doctrine over all the eaſt, and their particular office and miniſtry their names and deſtinations came to be aſſigned to each of them; for beſides the guardian angel of each individual, we hear in Daniel, of the tutelar ſpirits of kingdoms, of the angel of Perſia, and the angel of Judea; and Zechariah has introduced into his prophecy, a retinue of no leſs than four angels, whom a fifth calls expreſſly *the four ſpirits of the heavens, which go forth from ſtanding before the Lord*; from the exact correſpondence of which deſcription with this paſſage in Job, one would be almoſt tempted to conclude, that the angels *that came to preſent themſelves before God*, were the guardian ſpirits of the ſeveral kingdoms of this world.

What is deciſive of this whole matter is, the interview recorded by the prophet, between the angel of the Lord, whom I take to be the angel of Judea, and Satan, where under the type of Joſhuah, the reſtoration of the Jews is figured. *And he ſhewed me Joſhuah the high prieſt, ſtanding before the angel of the Lord, and Satan ſtanding at his right hand to reſiſt him.* Here the learned author of the *divine legation*, &c. with his wonted ſagacity obſerves, lies the whole of Job's ſcenical life in its original *ſtamina*, Satan's *ſtanding* at *Joſhuah*'s right hand, the place aſſigned always to the accuſer, is when drawn out more at length, his perſecution of Job; Joſhua *cloathed with filthy garments*, is Job *among the aſhes*; Joſhuah again *cloathed with changes of raiment and a fair mitre on his head*, is Job's proſperity on the *turning again of his captivity* [k]. And the whole of

[i] Paradiſe loſt, Book xx.

[k] Div. Leg. Vol. II. p. 530.

this

this tranſaction, or ſcenery, call it which you pleaſe, paſſes we muſt obſerve, under the immediate inſpection of the angel.

And if this were the language of jewiſh theology at this period, it will be ſtill the leſs wonder, to find the ſacred author in the ſituation he was in, enlarging a little his imagery upon the plan of the perſian theology, which taught the ſuperintendency of tutelar ſpirits over kingdoms and individuals in its utmoſt latitude, and from whence the Jews confeſs that they brought along with them the names of their months and angels, when they returned from the Babyloniſh captivity.

Hoſtanes the preceptor of Zoroaſter their prophet, laid it down, that the angels ſtand before the majeſty of the true God, and tremble and bow at the ſight of him; and the Perſians therefore believe, that in all neceſſities God is to be viſited, and that the angels do not any thing, but by commiſſion or delegation from God, as miniſtring ſpirits ought, who would promote their maſter's intereſts; and that the proper office and buſineſs of the angels is both to help and to ſave at the nod of their maſter, and to puniſh or inflict, as he commands; that the angels therefore are called ELOHIM, as being partakers of the divine councils, for that God does nothing till it has been conſidered of in the upper family, for ſo they call the angels[1].

Accordingly in the poetical theology of the heathens, the doctrine of guardian angels makes one part of their imagery; thus in the verſes given to Orpheus

Τῳ δε θρονῳ πυροεντι παρεδρατσιν πολυμοχθοι
Ἀγγελοι, οἱσι μεμηλε βροτοις ὡς πανθα τελεῖται.

At the bright throne th' angelic guard attends,
Heaven's faithfull'ſt meſſengers, and man's beſt friends.

And kingdoms as well as private perſons have their good and evil geniuſes, aſſigned them; a doctrine which our Shakeſpear has adopted, and made a moſt beautiful application of, when in his Julius Cæſar, he repreſents with the moſt daring ſtretch of fancy, the evil geniuſes as ſitting in council with the conſpirators of Rome, whom he calls the mortal inſtruments.

Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the firſt motion, all the interim is
Like a *phantaſma*, or a hideous dream.

[1] Hyde. Relig. vet. Pers. Lib. 20.

The genius and the mortal inſtruments
Are then in council, and the mind of man
Like to a little kingdom, ſuffers then
The nature of an inſurrection [m].

This conſidered, the date we have been all along fixing to the book of Job, will be found to correſpond exactly with the very time, in which this doctrine of the angelic miniſtry was in its full vigor in the jewiſh church, and that we have ſeen was ſomewhere within the Babyloniſh captivity; and in confirmation of this conjecture, it is a remark worth attending to, that the author of the book of Job calls the angels, *ſons of God*, a denomination exactly in the ſtile of Daniel, *Lo I ſee four men looſe, walking in the midſt of the fire, and they have no hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the ſon of God, i. e.* ſome angel.

Expreſſions ſuch as theſe, are plain indications, where it was, that the ſacred penman had his phraſe as well as his images, and it is great ſatisfaction to me to find a late author, whoſe critical talents have been made full proof of, in his *Obſervations tending to illuſtrate the book of Job*, concurring in this ſentiment. The word KEDVSHIM *holy ones*, or ſaints, Ch. v. 1. and Ch. xv. 15. ſays he, is exactly in the ſtile of Daniel, Ch. iv. 23; as the notion of *guardian angels*, Ch. xxxiii. 23. ſeems borrowed from the ſame country. The word Satan, for an *evil principle*, occurs no where I believe, earlier than 1 Chr. xxi. 1. but the author of this book lived as low as the captivity. The word RUACH is uſed Ch. iv. 15. for a *ſeparate exiſtence*, or what we now properly underſtand by the word *ſpirit*, but here and 1 Kings xxii. 21. are I think, the only places where we meet with the word in that ſenſe—'Twas to living and converſing in the country of *the captivity*, or to keep up to the characters of the ſpeakers perhaps, that we meet with ſuch a number of ſyriac and chaldee ſignifications of words, interſperſed throughout this poem, ſcarce if at all, to be met with in the other books of the old teſtament [n].

If the reader will be at the pains to look into Le Clerc's Comment upon the ſeveral paſſages referred to in the margin, he will be enabled to make an addition, of eight more Chaldaiſms to the author's cata-

[m] See Theobald's preface to Shakeſpear.
[n] Coſtard's Obſervations on Job. p. 29.

logue [o];

logue [o]; or into Spanheim's hiſtory of Job, and he will be referred to double at leaſt that number [p]; and let him go but to Codurc's preface to the book of Job, he will find, that there are much more than a hundred ſyriac and arabic words, ſcattered through the book, for the interpretation of which he is to go to the Chaldee Targums, or to the commentaries of the Rabbins, and not to any words analogous in the older ſcriptures; all which the judicious critick well remarks, are a moſt certain ſign, that the author of this book is to be ranked among the later writers of ſcripture, much about the time, when a great number of words borrowed from the ſeveral idioms of the neighbouring nations, had crept into the ſacred language.

What that time was, is well agreed among the learned; it was the very period we are contending for, the Babyloniſh captivity, a period fatal alike to the jewiſh language and liberty, the purity of the one keeping pace in all nations with the true ſpirit of the other, and dwindling of courſe into corruption and barbariſm, upon every invaſion of their liberties.

Yet ſee! what *hypotheſis* once ſtrongly conceived, and then warmly cheriſhed will not produce. The great Huette ſaw the impoſſibility there was, of not admitting all this inundation of foreign idiom upon the book, and therefore the charge he could not deny, of the frequent arabiſms, chaldaiſms, and ſyriaſms that occur in it, he reſolved by a dextrous kind of addreſs to evade, or rather by a childiſh diſtinction to get rid of. He had unfortunately at firſt, adopted the vulgar error of Moſes being the author of this book, an error, which by what authority I know not, has ſlipt into the margin of ſome of our engliſh bibles, and then he ſoon perceived the difficulty of reconciling all theſe adulterations, with the chaſtity of Moſes's ſtile; What was to be done then at ſuch a plunge? why, it was only ſuppoſing, that when Moſes wrote the Pentateuch, which is written in all the purity and accuracy of the hebrew tongue, he was arrived at thoſe years whoſe characteriſtick is coolneſs and accuracy, and when he wrote the book of Job, he was only a young man, and wrote in the full flow of fancy, and with all the warmth of an heated imagination; and lived and converſed in the land of Midian, and ſo corrupted his mother tongue with the arabic, ſyriac and other neighbouring languages [q].

But

[o] Ch. xii. 23. xv. 4, 12. xvi. 8. xxii. 16. xvii. 1. xviii. 2. xxi. 22. [p] Hiſt. Job. p. 545.
[q] Quod ſi grandius aliquod & ἀδρόλεξον ſonare videtur Liber Jobi, crebrioribuſque diſtinctus eſſe

But there is no evading I am well ſatisfied, the force of this argument drawn from later phraſes and foreign idiom, unleſs it be by that old refuge of the criticks, refining handſomly upon it, and diſcovering beauties, where all the world agrees there is deformity; it is a ſhorter cut no doubt, than a formal deduction of particulars, which beſides the length and tedioufneſs of the way, might be liable to miſcarriage in the end; whereas the traveller in this track, at the ſame time that he is ſet down much about the place where he was taken up, is ſure of ſome amuſement. And whether the learned Schultens, who to do him juſtice, has not been ſparing of his pains in conducting the reader through all the other intricacies of this book, has not dropt him in this inſtance, where by a chymical kind of proceſs upon theſe chaldaiſms, he has reſolved them all in one lump in the old hebrew mint, and brought them out again more than ſtandard weight and purity, is with me a queſtion.

The paſſage I have my eye upon, in this remark, is in the author's preface, where he lays it down, that none of all the ſacred writers carries ſuch genuin tokens of the remoteſt antiquity; the chaldaiſms which ſome lay hold of, from the plural terminations, of *in* inſtead of *im*, are true hebrew and arabic, and out of the oldeſt mint; much eaſier would it have been for a writer of the iron age, to have expreſſed the beauty and weight of Ennius's language, than for a Hebrew returned from the Babyloniſh exile, to come up to the grandeur and purity, ſo ſtrongly ſtampt with the faireſt ſignatures of the higheſt antiquity, which ſhine forth from this ſublime compoſition both for its matter and ſtile: in truth, he who cannot ſee this muſt be looked upon either as a diſſipated or an ignorant judge [r].

eſſe luminibus & ſententiis; memineris ſcriptum eſſe a Moſe, cum florentibus annis vigeret felix piæ mentis calor, illum vero, cum per ſenectam ætatem ignea vis deferbuiſſet. Huet. Dem. Ev. p. 226. Madianitæ porro, Arabica gens eſt, Syrorum & Idumæorum vicina, quos inter Moſes verſatus ex peregrino commercio patriam loquelam, quod uſu evenire ſolet, facile inquinavit. Quum artem ad ſuos reverſus intermiſſum purioris Ebraiſmi uſum repetiit, allitas ſermoni ſuo ſordes ita abſtulit, ut quum ad ſcribendum Pentateuchum animum deinde appelleret, major exiſteret ſermonis caſtitas & mundities. Ibid. 227.

[r] Nullus inter ſacros codices, tam genuinum remotiſſimæ antiquitatis præfert characterem;—Chaldaiſmi illi, quos nonnulli captant ex terminationibus pluralibus in *in* pro *im*, etiam hebraicæ & arabicæ ſunt ditionis, atque vetuſtiſſimæ monetæ. multo facilius Ennianæ linguæ venerandum decus & pondus expreſſiſſet ſcriptor aliquis ferreæ ætatis, quam Hebræus ab exilio Babylonio redux grandiſſimum illud, intemeratum, ultimâ vetuſtatis notâ eminentiſſima impreſſum, quod e ſublimi hâcce tam materiâ quam ſtylo compoſitione relucet; hoc qui diſcernere non valet, næ ille vel diſſipate, vel imperite judicare cenſendus. Schultens. Lib. Job. præf. p. 12.

A cenſure this, very diſcouraging it muſt be owned, to every enquirer, whoſe misfortunes it is, not to ſee with the ſame eyes with our critick, and yet profeſſes at the ſame time, an equal veneration for the book of Job, who conceives the prophecies of Ezekiel, who wrote within the captivity; of Daniel, who wrote probably immediately after it; of Zechariah and Malachi, not to mention ſome of the apocryphal books in our bibles; to have all the pretenſions which ſublimity of ſtile and majeſty of language could give them, to the remoteſt antiquity; but yet who plainly ſees, and therefore cannot help believing, that the ſubject matter of them all, and the particular phraſe of ſome, bring them down to an age much lower than *the remoteſt*, and fix them ſublime and majeſtic as they are, ſomewhere about the Babyloniſh captivity.

But majeſty of ſtile is one thing, and purity of language another; taſte and fancy, or at beſt, the arbitrary rules of art, go towards forming a judgment of the former, but the latter is fixt upon a much more ſolid foundation, and rooted in the very firſt elements of language: in the ſublime, we may be liable to frequent miſtakes in our judgment about it, taſte may miſlead us, or even the rules of art miſguide us; but in the purity of language we have an infallible chair, to appeal to, and an unerring guide to conduct us, if we will but attend to it. Phraſes or words of later date and origin than that particular age, in which their author is ſuppoſed to have lived, will ever be an irrefragable argument, againſt the author's having lived in that particular age; and words and phraſes not genuin, but adopted plainly from other languages, and borrowed from other countries, will be not a preſumption, for that is much too ſoft a term, but arguments ſtrong and concluſive, againſt the purity of any language of any author whatſoever; witneſs that corruption in our own, which within leſs than half a century, has been introduced into it from the french, and gone well nigh to impair the old maſculine nerve and grace of it.

If to words and phraſes of ſpeech, made uſe of in the book of Job, vaſtly diſproportionate to either the age or the purity of language, which authors are fond of attributing to it, and to terms of art, invented in the naming of the conſtellations a full thouſand years younger than the times of Moſes[f], we add the further conſiderations

[f] See Coſtard's third Letter to Martin Foulkes, Eſq; A. D. 1748. on the antient aſtronomy. After what has been already ſaid in relation to the word BARAC *curſe*, as it is here tranſlated,

derations of facts and perſons alluded to, hiſtory painted, events deſcribed, and characters drawn, which had no exiſtence for ſeveral hundred years after either Moſes or Solomon, the high antiquity of the book, whatever we may have conceived of it, is not with any ſhadow of reaſon, to be concluded upon; if theſe facts and events after all, correſpond as we ſay they do, with the grand event, which it has been the buſineſs of theſe ſheets to adjuſt them to, the Babyloniſh captivity, down at leaſt as low as the Babyloniſh captivity, we muſt bring the date of it.

The matter of the date thus ſtated, the next that comes under our conſideration, is of courſe, the author of this book; and this I make no ceremony in confeſſing, I have long taken to be *EZEKIEL*, and my reaſons for the conjecture, come now to be laid before the reader, who however has been already prepared in ſome degree for them, by what has been dropt occaſionally upon the ſubject, whenever that prophet has been mentioned.

The great argument drawn by moſt writers, upon this head from parity of ſtile, I very freely confeſs myſelf unequal to; though moſt undoubtedly, it is a circumſtance that deſerves great attention from thoſe, who are able to examine the book upon ſuch critical principles, and ſhould have weight with others who cannot, and where nothing more certain can be had, it is a circumſtance, whereon to ground an argument for determining the age and author of the book [t]; yet conſidering, how inconcluſive and precarious all arguments drawn from ſtile are, how dependant upon the different taſte and judgment of different men, in a language eſpecially, underſtood at preſent, with ſo little critical exactneſs, too great ſtreſs I apprehend, may be laid upon it, whenever we come to fix it as the grand criterion, whereby to determine ſo intricate a queſtion.

To give a ſingle inſtance of this difference of taſte in different writers upon this ſubject. Huette declares for Moſes being the author of the book, and ſees all the traces of his ſtile and character

tranſlated, but *bleſs* in the original hebrew, it is ſubmitted whether it be not one of thoſe *chaldaiſms*; for the Targum upon this text, Ch. ii. 9. explains it by BERIC. And I think it may be reckoned among thoſe peculiarities of Mr. Selden, which he maintains *quo jure quâve injuria*, that this word ſignifies to *bleſs* or *curſe*, ſtrictly and properly, without any figure, and that it is an *idiom* of the ſacred language, and to be diſtinguiſhed always by the circumſtances of the particular paſſage where it occurs. If this be true, I believe it is the only word in the ſacred language, which ſtrictly and properly, *i. e.* in the primary ſenſe of the word, conveys two meanings not different, but diametrically oppoſite. See Selden. de Jure. Nat. & Gent. p. 262.

[t] Dr. Grey's Anſwer to Mr. Warburton's Remarks, p. 25.

throughout,

hroughout, ſo that compare only the proſe of the one with the proſe of the other, and again, the verſe of the one with the verſe of the other, there appears at firſt ſight the greateſt reſemblance, a plain natural ſtile without any ſtudied ornament there, here a florid figured one[u].

On the other hand, Spanheim aſſerts roundly, that ſo far is the ſtile of Job from having any reſemblance at all to Moſes's, that they differ entirely, nor could there be a ſtronger reaſon than this difference, for denying Moſes to have had any hand in it; for beſides the beginning and end of the book, which are conceived in a plain ſimple ſtile, ſuch as that of the books of Samuel and the Kings, the reſt have nothing at all in common with Moſes's ſtile, but have many things, in common with the poetical books of David and Solomon, a great many, with the arabick and foreign dialect; ſublime, grand, crowded with ſentences, figures, ſimilitudes, and ſingular in very many of its words and phraſes [w].

Whether then ſomething more certain may not be had, or ſomething at leaſt, that will amount to a greater degree of probability, for that after all, is as far as we can hope to go in this point of enquiry, is now the conſideration; and the date of the book having been already reduced, in the courſe of our examination of it, as well from its language as from its obvious contents, as low as the captivity, let us now ſee, whether we cannot ſuit its age with an author: and if Ezekiel, from the particular circumſtances of his ſituation at this period, and the ſtill more particular circumſtances of his prophecy, has not to all appearance, the firſt pretenſions to this honor; and that he has, I am led to think from each of theſe particulars; firſt, that there is a very great reſemblance, between the argument, and ſecondly, between the phraſe and imagery of the two books.

The great argument preſſed all along by this prophet, upon the Jews during their captivity, in order to bring them to repentance, is the certainty of their reſtoration to their old country; both Iſaiah

[u] Mihi ea valde efficax videtur ad perſuadendum quæ ex manifeſta ſtili ac characteris ſimilitudine petitur. Ea eſt hujuſmodi, ut ſi proſam orationem cum proſâ, verſam cum verſâ contuleris, maxima ſtatim appareat conſenſio, ſimplex illic & nativa oratio, omni ornatu detracto, florida hic & ἰσχημαλισμενη. Huet. Dem. Ev. p. 226.

[w] Tantum vero abeſt, ut character Jobi, ſeu orationis genus cum Moſaico conveniat, ut differant toto genere; neu fortior ratio induxit magna nomina ut negarent Moſem ſcriptorem; præter enim priora libri & ultima, quæ concepta ſtilo ſimplici & plano, qualis in libris Sam. & Reg. reliqua nil commune habent cum oratione Moſis, multa cum poeticis libris Davidis & Solomonis, plurima cum arabico & exotico dicendi genere, ſublimi, arduo, denſo ſententiis, ſchematis, ſimilibus, alluſionibus, ſingulari etiam vocibus & phraſibus bene multis. Fr. Spanh. Hiſt. Job. p. 540.

indeed

indeed and Jeremiah, preſs this point upon the ſame motive, but the great charm that was to work with the Jew, and accordingly did work, was the rebuilding of his temple, and that too in all its former ſplendor and proportion; the model of this it is plain, was reſerved for Ezekiel to hold out to them, who was the prophet that went into captivity with them, and the general ſcope therefore of his whole prophecy is, by giving them a promiſe of reſtoring the temple of Solomon, to preſerve them from defiling themſelves with idolatry during their captivity, and when that ſhould expire, to encourage them to return home and rebuild their temple, and obſerve all the ordinances of their religion; and this is the argument of the book of Job.

But ſubordinate and miniſterial to this, there was another peculiar to this prophet, and for the novelty of which the Jews ſay, that there was a long debate in the Sanhedrim, whether this book of his ſhould be inſerted into their canon [x], and that was, that *the ſon ſhould not bear the iniquity of the father, but that the ſoul that ſinned, ſhould die* [y], which they held, to be directly the contrary of Moſes's doctrine, who had ſaid, that *the Lord viſiteth the ſins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation* [z]; and this again is one of the great topicks of debate in this book, and that which cauſes much perplexity between Job and his three friends, when he complains ſo frequently and ſo loudly as he does, of his being puniſhed, not for any ſins or tranſgreſſions of his own, but *that God had written bitter things againſt him, and made him to poſſeſs the ſins of his youth* [a].

Neither is the argument of Ezekiel's prophecy, the reſtoration of the Jews, the ſame preciſely with the argument in Job, but the figure and imagery, the phraſe and language, in which the promiſe of their reſtoration is conceived, are all of the ſame caſt, and ſhould ſeem to have been coined therefore in the ſame mint; the ruinous ſtate of the jewiſh republick at this period, the prophet deſcribes under the figure of ſo many dead and dry bones; the moral impoſſibility of its being ever reſtored again, under the natural one of their being ever compacted again into a living body; and the actual reſtoration of it, under the actual re-union of all the ſhattered members, and their being animated once more with life. Job's body is a down-

[x] Huett. Dem. Ev. p. 277. [y] Ezek. ch. xviii. [z] Exod. iv. 7.
[a] Ch. xiii. 26.

right

right ſkeleton; Job's reflections turn all, upon the natural impoſſibility, of ſuch a ſkeleton being ever cloathed again with fleſh; and Job at length is convinced, as well as Ezekiel's Jews, that though after his ſkin worms deſtroy his body, yet in his fleſh he ſhould, as he did, ſee God.

There is yet another circumſtance, which if ours be the true account of the allegory, regards the conduct, as this does the foundation of it, and that is, the appearance of the Edomite in the ſcene, upon this occaſion; Ezekiel was not only the prophet, who went into captivity with the Jews at this time, but was witneſs to all the ſpite and vengeance of the Edomite, that ſhewed its-ſelf ſo remarkably at this very juncture, and has therefore expoſed their malice and inſolence in terms, that very fully juſtify the whole conduct of the three friends in the *drama*, and indeed appear to me, to be the very ground-work of all that peeviſh and ſpiteful language, which they laviſh ſo plentifully upon the wretched Job [b].

But the ſeven days ſilence is of all the reſt, the moſt capital, I might ſay the moſt deciſive argument in favor of this conjecture, a circumſtance peculiar to this prophet, and which indeed had a particular connection with the relation he bore to the Jews, for in the ſame chapter, where he ſpeaks of his going to thoſe of the captivity, who dwelt upon the river of Chebar, he is ſet forth to them as a type or figure of their condition. *Then the glory of the Lord ſtood there, as the glory which I ſaw by the river of Chebar, and I fell on my face; and the ſpirit entered into me, and ſet me on my feet, and ſpake with me, and ſaid unto me, Go, ſhut thyſelf within thine houſe! but thou O ſon of man, behold they ſhall put bands upon thee, and ſhall bind thee with them, and thou ſhalt not go out among them?* Obſerve what follows, *and I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou ſhalt be dumb, and ſhalt not be to them a reprover for they are a rebellious houſe* [c].

And this by the way, will go a good deal towards determining the date, as well as the author of this book; for earlier than the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, when Ezekiel went into captivity, it could not have been written, if this be the circumſtance ſhadowed in the ſeven days ſilence; ſomewhere therefore or other within the firſt fourteen years, after the taking of Jeruſalem by Nebuchadnezzar, it muſt bear date, for ſo long only, Ezekiel is ſaid

[b] Ezek. xxv. 12. xxxv. [c] Ezek. iii. 23.

to

to have propheſied. Joſephus ſays, that he left two books concerning the captivity of Babylon, and Athanaſius ſpeaks of one of the two volumes written by Ezekiel [d], but any another than the book of his prophecy, if this be not one, has not been handed down to us; be that as it will, for the reaſons already mentioned, I can neither concur with Le Clerc, nor yet with the learned author of *the divine legation*, &c. the two great advocates for the captivity being the ſubject of the book, in the date they give it; the former places it at the commencement of the captivity, but there are facts mentioned in the book, of a date much lower; the latter places it juſt upon their return from the captivity, but this will furniſh no matter of conſolation to the captive Jew, and the truth lies I am perſuaded, ſomewhere between theſe two extremes.

After ſo ſtriking preſumptions as theſe, we ſhall have the leſs temptation to lay any more than ordinary ſtreſs, upon ſome other particulars, regarding this prophet's peculiar phraſe and poetical accompliſhments, to which however ſome attention ſhould be paid; the lxiv[th] pſalm is called a pſalm LEDABID, of Ezekiel and Jeremiah, which the two prophets probably, ſung to their reſpective captives in Egypt and Babylon, and Ezekiel, by way of eminence, is called the parabolical prophet, and no wonder, when the very Jews he ſpoke to, made the comment, *Ah Lord! doth he not ſpeak parables* [e]?

He had given them an ample ſpecimen of his talents in this way, in the parable he had juſt delivered, of *the foreſt of the ſouth field*, which we have ſhewn to be the baſis of that imagery of the fire in the prologue of the book under enquiry; and if we look but into the xix[th] chapter of this prophecy, where under the figure of a lion's whelp, the ſad cataſtrophe of two kings of Judah is deſcribed, we ſhall be at no loſs to find the foundation too of that ſpirited piece of imagery in the opening of the *drama*. *The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, and the teeth of the young lions are broken; the old lion periſheth for lack of prey, and the ſtout lion's whelps are ſcattered abroad* [e].

Imagery ſuch as this, well deſerves the encomium his commentator gives the prophet, and vindicates ſufficiently the criticiſm he has paſſed upon his particular ſtile, that it exactly anſwers the character the greek rhetoricians give, of that part of oratory,

[d] See Huette. Dem. Evang. p. 277. Calmet's preface to Ezekiel.
[e] XIX. 49. [e] Job, Chap. iv. 10.

which

which they call the Δεινωσις [f], its property being to aggravate things in themſelves diſagreeable and odious, and repreſent them with great force and efficacy of expreſſion; ſomething like what Rapin the french critick obſerves of this ſtile, which he calls *le terrible*, as having ſomething in it, that ſtrikes the reader with holy dread and aſtoniſhment [g]; and whether this be not the very ſtile, under which we are to rank that of the author of the book of Job, is left with the critical reader. Another Ezekiel there is, quoted by Clemens Alexandrinus, who wrote a poem upon *the bringing of the children of Iſrael out of Egypt*, in greek, a fragment of which is to be ſeen there, and the hint perhaps, is taken from the reſemblance between the two names and the two ſubjects [h].

But if after all, the ſacred author proves to be as we have before inſinuated, and as it has been ſometimes conjectured, the very moderator in this diſpute between Job and the three friends, figured in the character of Elihu the Buzite, then we are furniſhed with a freſh and ſubſtantial confirmation of this conjecture of ours, for Ezekiel is expreſly called BEN BUZI, *the ſon of Buz* [i]; and I think it no ſmall credit reflected upon this conjecture, that long after I took it up, I had the ſatisfaction to find an author of approved experience in this book, of opinion, that Ezekiel is as likely as any one, to be the author of it, who was carried to Babylon with the firſt captivity under Jehoiachim, and accordingly dates all his prophecies from that time [k].

And now, beſides being able to give ſome account from hence, of the frequent arabiſms in this book, we ſee the reaſon of this prophet being the only one, that makes mention of the name of Job, whom he has ranked with two well known characters, Noah and Daniel, for he lived upon the ſpot, where the traditional Job flouriſhed. And here the geography of the book begins to open, juſt where the *drama* is ſhutting up; Uz and Buz were two ſons of Nahor by Milcah [l], Nahor was ſettled in Charran, the ſouthern part of Meſopotamia, and upon the confines of the *deſert Arabia*; Uz his firſtborn, ſettled in that part of the *deſert Arabia*, which laid towards Babylon and the Euphrates [m], and Buz probably there or thereabouts, for Jeremiah mentions Buz with Dedan and Tema, and

[f] Oratio, quæ rebus aſperis, indignis & invidioſis vim addit. Quintil. L. vi. c. 3.
[g] Lowth's preface to Ezekiel, p. xi. [h] Clem. Alex. Strom. I.
[i] Ezek. i. 3. [k] Coſtard's Obſerv. on Job. p. 19. [l] Gen. xxii. 20.
[m] Jer. xxv. 23.

with the kings of Arabia and the *mixed people* of the deſert [n], and there Ptolomy, who ſtudied the geography of Arabia with more than ordinary attention, and deſcribed it with more than his common accuracy, places the land of Uz; and there too the inſertion in the LXX. fixes it, from the ſyriac copy [o].

With this ſituation of theſe two countries, agree exactly the ſituations, of both the Sabeans and Chaldeans, for Cheſed, from whom the CHASDIM, *Chaldeans* ſprung, was the fourth ſon of Nahor, Abraham's brother, and ſettled upon the Euphrates; and Shebah, the ſon of Jockſhan, the grandſon of Abraham by Keturah, in the *deſert Arabia*, upon the confines of Babylon, ſo that their deſcent upon the land of Uz, was as eaſy as it was natural; nor, conſidering that the land of Edom is joined to the *deſert Arabia* at the entrance of Bozra, is it any great offence againſt the old geography of the eaſt, and much leſs againſt the geography of thoſe times, when the Arabians and the Edomites grew to be confounded, as they did, when they became tributary to the Babyloniſh monarchy, to ſuppoſe, the three friends to come from Edom into the land of Uz, *i. e.* into the *deſert Arabia*, to viſit and condole with Job [p].

I am the more particular in this point, both as I at firſt laid it down, that the ſeed of Abraham is at the bottom of this whole allegory, and as I conceive, there is ſome neceſſity of accommodating the geography, of the traditional Job's ſituation, with the geography of the other countries mentioned in the poem; I ſay ſome neceſſity, becauſe the nearer theſe are brought to bear, the better, but abſolute neceſſity there is not, becauſe the dramatic poet does not confine himſelf to preciſe ſituations, as he ſets not up for a geographer, no more than the epic poet confines himſelf to preciſe hiſtory, as he ſets not up for an hiſtorian; each of them alike, takes juſt ſo much out of real hiſtory, as ſerves his turn, and change the reſt, as it beſt ſuits his purpoſe, little expecting, that any one ſhould come to the ſtage, to be inſtructed in true hiſtory [q].

[o] Ἐν μεν γη καλοικων Ἀυσιλιδι, των ὁριων τυ Ἐυφραλε. LXX ad calcem libri Job.

[p] Terram Utz vel Hus, vel Hus Arabibus, quæ hinc Græcis, Ἀυσιλις, nemo neget id retinuiſſe nominis a primo gentis fundatore Utzo. Nec modo ſic regio appellata Jobi ætate, ſed ætate hebræi hujuſce autoris, & illâ Jeremiâ non ſemel terram memorantis. Atqui præterquam quod divinus hic vates inter Arabiæ populos recenſet Auſitas, ab Edomitis diſtinctos, certum eſt quoque Nachoris in eâ circiter quam diximus parte ſedem habuiſſe ſuam. —Plane ut ex Buz ejuſdem Nachoris filio altera fuit Buzitis regio Arabiæ. Fr. Spanh. Hiſt. Job. p. 101.

[q] Labbe D'Auvignac. La pratique de theatre. L. II. ch. .

It

It is commonly aſked I know, how far the poet may venture in the alteration of a true ſtory, in order to fit it for the ſtage, and it is a queſtion, upon which, the opinions of both the antient and modern criticks are greatly divided, and therefore it would but ill become me, to determine upon it; but whatever may be the caſe with the profane, ſo much I think, we may venture to pronounce upon the ſacred *drama*, that the variations ſhould rather be in the circumſtances, than in the principal facts; but without ſome variation, from the letter even of theſe, without images and incidents, dialogue and epiſodes, occaſionally ſcattered, and properly diſpoſed throughout the work, it could be no *drama* at all, but an unanimated cold piece of hiſtory.

Yet the nearer that fable approaches to truth, the more beautiful it is, and an appearance of reality is neceſſary even in fiction its-ſelf, for as a great enquirer after truth obſerves, the proper foundation of all beauty is truth; and yet pure truths repreſented naked, and juſt as they are in themſelves, do not ſo forcibly affect the mind, as when they are conveyed under ſenſible appearances; we may therefore render it ſenſible, to make it more amiable to us and engage our attention, yet we muſt not make uſe of ſuch ſenſible things, as dazzle too much, but ſuch as make the truth appear to us, in a more charming and attractive dreſs[r].

In the caſe of allegorical compoſitions, this rule holds ſtill the ſtronger, here one thing is repreſented and another underſtood; the end and deſign of them is, to enforce in a more agreeable and leſs ſuſpected manner, ſome uſeful moral, or to repreſent ſome real action: the means to this end made uſe of, are generally either ſome known ſtory, or elſe ſome mere fiction, under which the action is ſhadowed, or the inſtruction conveyed, but without truth at the bottom for its baſis, neither could the end be come at with any certainty, nor the means be juſtified to any propriety.

It were eaſy, were it at all neceſſary, to explain this obſervation from the conduct of the frequent allegories, introduced into the old teſtament, and the ſtill more frequent parables, uſed by Chriſt and his diſciples in the new, all of them condeſcending, as the cir-

[r] Ainſi on peut couvrir de quelque choſe des ſenſible les veritez que nous voulons comprendre et enſeigner aux autres, afin d'arreter l'eſprit qui aime les ſenſible, & qui ne ſe prend aiſement que par quelque choſe, qui flatte les ſens. Nous devons donc nous ſervir dans la connoiſſance de la verite de quelque choſe de ſenſible, qui n'ait point trop d'eclat, & qui ne nous arrête point trop au ſenſible. Malebranche. Recherche de la Verite. L. vi. c. 3.

cumſtances of time, place and perſons required, to the apprehenſions of thoſe they were addreſſed to, and engaging their attention, or amuſing their minds with ſenſible images, in order to improve it. Examine only that ſingle parable of Nathan's, of the *Ewe-lamb*, by the ſevere rules of real fact and hiſtoric truth, and there is no defending it upon ſuch principles, but bring it to the proper teſt of truth and nature, you ſee it in all its beauty, and enter at once, into the ſpirit of the prophet's reproof, and the motives of David's conviction.

Here indeed, the whole allegory rolls upon a meer fiction, yet upon ſuch a fiction, as experience, life and nature ſufficiently juſtify, and to which indeed it is indebted, for all its beauty and efficacy; but in the book of Job, the allegory turns upon that other hinge, a known ſtory, and upon the adjuſting of that, by the dramatic rules of art, to the reproof and conviction of the perſons, for whoſe inſtruction it was deſigned, depends all its beauty and propriety. Let us ſee therefore how that matter ſtands, and what materials, the ſacred author had furniſhed ready to his hand, towards ſuch a compoſition, and how far he has varied from them, or improved upon them, in order to perfect his allegory.

Of the exiſtence of ſuch a perſon as Job, in ſome part or other of the eaſt, no queſtion can be made; the traditions of him down to this very day [f], joined to the teſtimony of ſcripture born to him, are ſtubborn proofs of that fact, nor though they differ, as to his country, ſome placing him, in one or other of the Arabias; ſome in Armenia; ſome in Syria; ſome in Idumea; and others again in Paleſtine, is all this difference, any more an argument againſt the exiſtence of ſuch a man, than the contention amongſt the ſeven cities of Greece, for having given birth to Homer, is an argument againſt his exiſtence; in truth, ſuch difference is rather a preſumption, I had almoſt ſaid, a demonſtration of it.

That he was a man of great probity and virtue, and that his characteriſtic virtue was patience; that he had large poſſeſſions, larger in proportion than his neighbours; that he had a numerous family, and dependants too in proportion; that at ſome period or other of

[f] Depuis Hems juſque a Hama eſt le lien, ques les gens du pais diſent avoir été habité par Job & ſa famille. Thevenot. Voiages, p. 447. Nous n'oblierons pas de dire que le pays qui eſt entre Emeſe et Apamée a été habité par Job & ſa famille, ſelon la tradition du même pays, qui veut encore que Job etoit originaire d' Emoſe. La Roque Voiages de Syrie. Tom. I. p. 239.

his

his life, he had fallen into very great calamities; calamities ſo great, that he found himſelf deprived at once of all his fortunes, and reduced to downright indigence; and afterwards reſtored to all his former affluence; is all that we can poſſibly either from tradition, or upon the face of his ſcenical ſtory, ſtript of all its fictitious ornament, gather concerning him, unleſs we take for granted all thoſe ſilly tales related of him, by Keſſæus and the arabian fabuliſts [t].

Such a ſtory it is true, in the perſon of Job, preſented the poet with a character new perhaps, and uncommon, but what elſe did it preſent? the calamities that befel him, great as they were, were not brought about by any conſpiracy, nor the revolution he experienced in them, accompliſhed by any intrigue; he might be what he was, the great and good man; the virtuous patient Job; the tender parent, and the kind huſband that he is drawn; ſtill all this goes but a little way, towards furniſhing a dramatic repreſentation; it was an affecting conciſe piece of hiſtory indeed, but to make out of it, a tragedy of any proper length, or tolerable integrity of action, called for all the poet's ſkill and addreſs; he had recourſe therefore to invention, and being in poſſeſſion of a fine character, caſt about of courſe for ſituation, that might exhibit it in its full extent and latitude. The introducing of the devil into the prologue, did the buſineſs of Job's calamities, and of the three friends into the ſcene, the work of his perſecutions.

Nor was this the whole difficulty; for in poſſeſſion as he was, of ſuch a character, his next taſk was, to twiſt and contrive it to the uſes of his allegory, and the conviction and reformation of the Jew, in order to his reſtoration, was the main drift and purpoſe of that; but then how could the conviction of the wicked impatient Jew, be brought about by the perſecution of the virtuous and patient Job? here ſome addreſs became neceſſary, and it was but ſhifting the ſcene a while, and putting Job upon a part, which all the world might ſee was out of character, and the deſign was completely anſwered; he was to ſpeak a language foreign to him, to ſhew the Jew the abſurdity of it; to inſiſt upon that favorite plea of theirs, their innocence, to ſhew the falſity and impiety of it; and was to be brought at laſt, to a conviction of guilt, to ſhew them the neceſſity of repentance.

[t] Hottinger's Hiſt. Or. p. 37. Bellamy's Paraphraſe on Job. p. 9. Miſc. Remarks on Chap. ii.

So

So long as the requiſite diſpoſitions were made for all this, in the procedure of the *drama*, and the audience was prepared for it, by having been firſt apprized, that it was a part only that he was acting, and a perſonated character that he ſuſtained, no injury was done to either Job's innocence or to dramatic decorum, eſpecially when things were ſo managed in the concluſion, that his innocence was made good to him once more, and juſtified by God himſelf; when the maſk was taken off from him, and juſtice done to his real character, and he reſumes all the pious ſentiments of patience and reſignation, that he had been made awhile to diſclaim.

Though the Cynick therefore of old, would have recommended a ſtatue, for the true model of patience, yet the poet has made choice of a much better image, to convey his leſſon of that virtue, and by expoſing the vice of impatience, in ſo ridiculous a figure, as Job cuts in that character, has effectually recommended its reverſe; and ſhewn where the true merit as well as the true beauty of that virtue lies, by thoſe admirable ſtrokes of raillery and reproof, which the three friends take occaſion to level at Job, for the impatience he expreſſes, and by the noble precepts of humility and reſignation, that they all along inculcate.

What Dr. Grey obſerves therefore, that the writer, in order to give a document of humility and patience, had ſufficiently diſcharged his plan, if he made but Job conclude reſigned and ſubmiſſive, though he had drawn him turbulent, impatient and almoſt, he might have ſaid quite blaſphemous throughout the whole piece, is extremely right, becauſe the nature of the *drama*, the deſign of which, was to ſhew the unjuſtifiableneſs of all ſuch complaints and exceſſes, under even the ſtrongeſt temptations to them, required it; and ſo too did the moral of his allegory, which was from ſuch a diſagreeable repreſentation, to convey impreſſions as diſagreeable, of all ſuch language and conduct. Thus it is well known, that it was a practice among the Spartans, to make their ſlaves drunk, in order to give their children a leſſon of ſobriety; and the parable of the prodigal ſon, is in one part of it, a lively repreſentation of lewdneſs and riot, but at the ſame time, the ſcope of it is doubtleſs, not only to encourage repentance, but to recommend virtue and regularity [u].

Theſe like ſo many diſtorted figures in painting, have a ſurpriſing effect, ſuited exactly to the character, they are deſigned to expoſe, and ſhew how far they are deviated beyond natural proportion. A warrior like Achilles, at the toilette; a Sampſon, making

ſport for the Philiſtines; a David, concerting an intrigue; a Solomon, in a ſtate of infatuation; are ſo many inſtructive leſſons of the virtues, they had deſerted, as they place the ſeveral weakneſſes or vices of ſo diſtinguiſhed characters, in a point of light, which at the ſame time ſhew their obliquity, and make them ſupremely ridiculous. A Job, impatient, and an Edomite, humane, are figures equal to the beſt of them.

Two of our firſt Reformers, Luther and Calvin, ſeem to have ſet out with ſome ſuch notions as theſe, of the art and conduct of this book; the former, who gives it to Solomon, is of opinion, that the hebrew poet deſcribes Job's temptations and tribulations, like as Virgil deſcribeth Eneas that valiant champion, and led him through waters, ſeas and places, and made of him a fine politician and ſolder [w]; by enuring him I ſuppoſe, to the hardſhips and dangers of a tedious expedition, and from the experience of ſuch ſevere diſcipline, teaching him the one great leſſon, common to the ſoldier and the politician, of perſeverance and ſteadineſs.

The latter comes ſtill nearer the true ſecret, as he entered with greater ſagacity, into the conduct of the argument; for his notion of that is, that in the whole debate, Job has the pleading of a good cauſe, but maintains it ill, the three friends of a bad one, but maintain it well; Job therefore, he ſays, in poſſeſſion of a good argument, tranſgreſſed the bounds of his queſtion, and the bounds too of all decency in maintaining it, when he ſuffered himſelf to be tranſported into all that rage of deſpair, and that indecency of language towards God. On the contrary, the three friends, who have the pleading of a bad cauſe, ſay nothing in the defence of it, which is not true, nothing which the holy ſpirit its-ſelf might not have pronounced upon the occaſion, for they aſſert the very fundamentals of all true religion, and treat of God's providence, of God's juſtice, and of man's corruption [x].

[v] Grey's Anſwer to Mr. Warburton's Remarks. p. 39.

[w] Luther. Table-talk. p. 359.

[x] Iſtud interea obſervare debemus, in totâ diſputatione Jobum tueri bonam cauſam, ejus vero adverſarios malam; præterea Jobum cauſam bonam male, illos autem malam bene agere;—Jobus enim extra cardines exiliens, non tenet modum in verbis, ſed in multis partibus deſperabundi hominis ſigna dare videtur; imo in ipſum Deum ita excandeſcit, ut ei reſiſtere velle videtur. En igitur bonam cauſam malè actam! E contrario qui malam cauſam tuentur, nihil dicunt quod non ſit admittendum, quaſi ab ipſo S. S. ſit pronuntiatum, nam ipſa eſt veritas, ſunt ipſa religionis fundamenta, agunt de Dei providentia tractant de ipſius juſtitiâ, deque peccatis hominum. Joh. Calvin. Concio. I. in Job.

All

All this is perfectly judicious, ſo far as the diſtinction goes, between the conduct of the argument on each ſide, for nothing ſo clear to an attentive reader, as the addreſs there is, in their maintaining each an argument, inconſiſtent with his character; but I much ſuſpect the truth of Job's being in poſſeſſion, of a good argument, or the friends of a bad one, and am ſatisfied, that in this part of our author's diſtinction, his ſagacity failed him, and yet that in general, all that they ſay is right, and all that Job ſays wrong, in the dramatic repreſentation of them, is a diſtinction, that has its foundation in the very art and management of the *drama*, and upon which, as we have before intimated, turns the whole cataſtrophe of Job's acquittal, and of the friend's condemnation.

Thus far then, though the ſacred writer ſet out with a plain ſimple image of a pious patient man, experiencing alternately, the viciſſitudes of a hard and a kind fortune, no injuſtice is done the character, by having been put induſtriouſly upon this piece of ſervice, ſo long as it was made only to anſwer the main purpoſe of his allegory, and all that patience and piety, which appears in ſo ſtrong a light, in the prologue, though it fluctuate between hope and deſpair in the ſcene, is fully vindicated again to him in the epilogue; in the ſcene, he is made to ſpeak the language of the impatient Jew, in the two other parts, he ſpeaks his own; in his ſcenic character, he is condemned, in his own proper character, he is juſtified.

But farther, as the traditional ſtory of Job, was the baſis, ſo was the more recent ſtory of Hezekiah, the plan probably, of his *drama*, here he had a picture capital and authentic, of all their vanity and all their deſpondency, to hold out to the Jews, a picture, which they muſt have firſt forgotten the records of one of their beſt and moſt favorite princes, e'er they could miſtake; upon this therefore, he might concert his firſt plan, and by accommodating the circumſtances of Job's to Hezekiah's ſtory, enlarge it at his own pleaſure, and carry his allegory into execution, the more ſucceſsfully, by preſenting them with an image, familiar enough to them, though enveloped at the ſame time, in all that ſhade, which the art and buſineſs of a dramatic performance, naturally threw over it.

It is a miſtake then to conceive, that " if we take the whole book of Job together, including the introduction and concluſion, that the ſubject of it may then not improperly, be called *the hiſtory of Job*, containing more particularly, an account of his ſufferings, his behaviour

viour under them and his reſtoration after them [y];" for neither in fact, does the book contain any hiſtory at all of any ſuch perſon as Job, but only borrows his name and character, a name and character, revered throughout all the eaſt, to erect thereupon, a dramatic performance, whoſe buſineſs it was, to furniſh a document of patience to the captive Jew; ſo far as this particular virtue is carried, in the ſcene, juſt ſo far is juſtice done, to the traditional character of Job; where it deviates from it, we may be ſure, it is to ſerve ſome end or other, conſiſtent with this idea, though we do not inſtantly perceive it, eſpecially when through the intrigue of the drama, we find it returning gradually, to the point it ſet out from.

Shakeſpear's JULIUS CÆSAR, and Addiſon's CATO, are both of them, built upon the plan of old roman ſpirit, and of old roman liberty, but at the ſame time that the Roman ſpeaks, under each of theſe, is conveyed a refined piece of allegory, and leſſons big with noble inſtructions to a britiſh audience; ſo too is the tragedy of Job, built upon the plan of the celebrated patience, of ſome ſuch antient hero as Job, and under it too, is conveyed an allegory, and a leſſon of uſeful inſtruction to the captive Jew; but neither the one nor the other, can therefore be ſaid, to contain true hiſtory, though they be erected manifeſtly, upon the hiſtoric characters of the reſpective perſons, whoſe name they bear.

And this diſtinction ought the more carefully to be attended to, becauſe the neglect of it I conceive, has long been the occaſion of introducing great diſorder and confuſion both into the hiſtory and chronology of thoſe antient times, of which there remain few other than poetical records; for by endeavouring to pick out matter of true hiſtory, from old dramatic pieces, and not being able to ſeparate the truth from the fable, authors have oft retailed to the world, for ſo many facts, what the poets, by the allowed privilege of their profeſſion, changing the times and the events to the exigence of their drama, ſet down as fabulous. An obſervation, for which I am indebted to a great maſter of the antient drama, and in which, the learned advocates for the book of Job being a real hiſtory, are more concerned than they ſeem aware of [z].

As

[y] Grey's Anſwer to Mr. Warburton. p. 50.

[z] J'eſtime que les Tragiques anciens ont été cauſe du grand deſordre, qu'il y a dans l'hiſtoire & dans la chronologie et ce vieux temps, que Varron appelle fabuleux, parceque ayant

As I have mentioned Mr. Addiſon's CATO, the reader will indulge me in a ſhort obſervation, which offers its-ſelf upon a ſlight compariſon of that, with the drama under conſideration; miſtake me not; I do not mean to compare the two performances, or to inſinuate any competition between them; all I mean by it is, from the chaſtity of both the ſtile and ſentiment, the exactneſs of character, and the morality of inſtruction in the latter, which indeed were my motives for fixing upon it, and from a likeneſs of character, between the two heroes, and a likeneſs of circumſtances, in the ſituation of the two poets, in the adjuſtment of the reſpective characters, to their purpoſe, to give ſome tolerable notion of the art and management, of this compoſition.

Cato, a great, and according to the philoſophy of the times, a good man, pent up within the walls of Utica, lays violent hands upon himſelf, in order to avoid his falling into Cæſar's; this is preciſely all that is ſupplied from hiſtory[a], or what I have choſe to call the hiſtoric baſis of the drama; yet ſhort and ſlender as theſe materials ſeem, the world has ſeen a tragedy of that length and integrity of action, produced out of them, as few if any, of the profane tragedians have equalled, and it has been a ſubject, thought ſo extremely well fitted to the ſtage, that a french poet has preſumed to rival Mr. Addiſon in it[b]; but the difficulty of ſuch a piece being at all produced, from ſuch ſlender materials, without ſome degree of fiction and invention, the ſole reading of Cato's life in Plutarch will convince any man of, and therefore to fill up the compaſs of a tragedy, and to inculcate the great moral of the whole, the inſupportableneſs of deſpotic power, and the bleſſings of liberty, demanded all the ſkill and addreſs, and all the execution too of ſo accompliſhed a maſter.

The ſame obſervation may be juſtified with regard to the ſacred drama, now under our examination, Job a great and good man, greatly we ſee unfortunate as well as greatly good, falls of a ſudden into the moſt wretched ſtate of affliction and deſpair, but by a revolution as unforeſeen as unlikely, is reſtored again; this is preciſely

ayant changè les evenemens & l'ordre des années, ils ont donnè lieux aux ecrivains, qui ne ſont arrétez a leurs poêmes, comme a des hiſtoires, de ſe contredire & de confondre la fable avec la verité. L'Abbe d'Aubignac La pratique du theat. Tom. 1. p. 61.

[a] Cato. une Tragedie. par Mounſieur Des Champs. a Paris. A. D. 1716. See the preface.

[b] Ecce ſpectaculum! dignum ad quod reſpiciat intentus ſuo operi Deus. Ecce par Deo ſignum! Vir fortis cum malâ fortunâ compoſitus. Non video inquam, quid habeat in terris Jupiter pulcrius, ſi convertere animum velit, quam ut ſpectet Catonem jam partibus non ſemel fractis, ſtantem nihilominus & inter ruinas publicas erectum.

the hiſtoric baſis of this drama, all that tradition had ſupplied towards it; but to make a tragedy out of ſo ſcanty a pattern as this, and at the ſame time, to convey the great moral of patience to thoſe, for whoſe inſtruction it was compoſed, required art and management, in the introducing of other characters into his ſcene, and theſe were to inculcate his grand doctrine, and to effect at laſt under the appearance of a friendly debate, what could hardly have been inculcated with the ſame ſucceſs by precept.

Thus it is, ſays the Abbe d'Aubignac, that the ſtage becomes a place of inſtruction, when the action of it is ſo judiciouſly managed, that it ſhews the force of virtue triumphing in the midſt of perſecutions, after which it is frequently rewarded, but if totally overwhelmed by them, it remains glorious even unto death; 'tis thus the ſtage becomes inſtructive to the publick, by the obſervation of things repreſented, and I have always obſerved, that it is not agreeable to the audience, that a man, who ſwerves from the ways of virtue, ſhould be ſet right at laſt and repent, by the meer ſtrength of precepts or moral ſentences, but we rather deſire, that he ſhould be ſet right by ſome adventure or other that preſſes him, and forces him to take up virtuous and reaſonable ſentiments [c]. An obſervation, founded in a thorough acquaintance with human nature, and at the ſame time, ſo exactly ſuited to the whole conduct and cataſtrophe of the *drama* before us, that a better comment upon it could not have been furniſhed [c].

And now, after what has been ſaid upon this ſubject, and the compoſition has been all along reſolved upon dramatic principles, there is the leſs occaſion for detaining my reader much longer, with any ſentiments of mine, about the nature of the work, or how ſucceſſfully the ſacred author has executed his plan, conſidered barely as a dramatic writer; thoſe who have attended to the ſtructure and machinery of the poem, have obſerved, that beſides the prologue and the epilogue, with which it is rounded, it contains five entire acts, which ſo far exactly correſponds with the moſt finiſhed pieces in the old

[c] L'action du theatre etant bien expliquée & bien conduite, elle fait voir la force de la vertu brillant au milieu des perſecutions: elle y eſt ſouvent couronnée; & quand même elle y eſt ſuccombe, elle demeure toujours glorieuſe.—Ce'ſt ainſi principalement que le theatre doit être inſtructif au public, par la ſeule connoiſſance des choſes repreſentées, & j'ai toujours remarqué, qu'on ne ſouffre pas aiſément ſur le theatre, qu'un homme égaré du droit chemin de la vertu, rentre en ſon devoir, par des beaux preceptes, qu'on lui vient debiter; on veut que ce ſoit par quelque avanture, qui le preſſe, & qui l'oblige de reprendre des ſentimens raiſonnable. La pratique du Theatre. L. iv. c. 5.

greek tragedy, but I much ſuſpect, that low as the date of this has been reduced, yet that it ſtands too high, to be finiſhed upon the preciſe rules of the athenian ſtage, nor indeed do I ſee the neceſſity of ſuch a ſuppoſition, in order to give it all the perfection, that a *drama* of that ſtanding, might be ſuppoſed to have.

To me it ſeems much more likely, that it is a *drama* of a ſingle act only, and that what have generally paſſed for ſo many diſtinct acts, are but juſt ſo many different ſcenes, for it is plain upon the face of it, that all the interval there is in the action, is but between the going out and coming in again, of the ſelf-ſame actors; Eliphaz opens the debate, Bildad ſeconds him, and Zophar ſucceeds him, and in this order they attack Job, who gives each of them his anſwer in their turn; Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar reply to his debate exactly in the ſame order, in the ſecond ſcene, and ſo again in the ſelf-ſame order, in the third; Elihu makes his appearance in the fourth, and the Θεὸς ἀπο Μηχανης, God in the whirlwind, opens the fifth, and then the epilogue cloſes all.

Exactly ſuited to the ſimplicity of the mechaniſm of the poem, is the conduct of the debate, there the actors are all the ſame perſons and preſerve the ſame order, here the argument is one and the ſame all along, though maintained by different perſons; nor can I, with all the attention I have paid to their reſpective arguments, diſcover the leaſt material variation, either in the caſt of the arguments themſelves, or in their manner of treating them; the two points they ſet out with, Job's guilt, and the neceſſity of Job's ſubmiſſion, in order to his reſtoration, are invariably the two points they perſiſt in, and the parade there is made of words, upon ſome little incidental topicks of ſpeculation, that aroſe out of the grand argument, are but ſo many epiſodes, contrived to lengthen out the *drama*, and to diſplay the talents of the ſeveral ſpeakers.

In ſhort, look upon Job and the three friends, in the light they deſire to be viewed in, and in the light therefore, we ought to view them in, only as ſo many advocates, ſetting out to plead a cauſe pro and con, they maintaining, he denying the charge againſt him, not in the ſummary way of proceeding in ſuch cauſes, by formal bill and anſwer, but by affected delays and ſtudied points of difficulty, you then begin to enter into the conduct of this debate, and gradually come to ſee, that all thoſe ſpeculative problems, which have been miſtaken for ſo many ſet *theſes* and arguments, are but ſo many occaſional ſubjects of diſpute, though they have all of them ſome

connection

connection or other, with the main argument; and that thoſe noble and ſublime ſentiments, ſcattered here and there, through the whole of the pleadings, are but ſo many flowers of rhetorick, or ſo many beautiful digreſſions, calculated to diſplay the orator's parts, in the maintaining of his cauſe, where it was but natural for him, to offer all that invention could produce, as well as all that truth could ſuggeſt, towards his argument.

What Mr. Calmet therefore in Elihu's manner of ſpeaking, calls *une vain étalage des paroles* [d], an empty parade of words, may with great propriety be pronounced upon Job's, who had undertaken to plead a cauſe he had no other concern in, than as an advocate, and which was too bad to bear any other, than plauſible reaſonings; the more he flouriſhed upon innocence, the more he took thoſe engaged on the other ſide, out of ſight of the true queſtion, which was his guilt, and the finer ſentiments he dropt, concerning virtue, the leſs would all that vice, which was at the bottom of the cauſe he was pleading, be ſuſpected; and if diſingenuous evaſions, inſidious queſtions, and captious complainings; if ſophiſtry and chicanery, form any preſumptions of a bad cauſe, never had advocate a worſe, never was there any that called for the reproof, which God therefore gives it, more juſtly, *Who is this that darkeneth council by words without knowledge* [e]?

Had the learned author, who has paſſed this bold criticiſm upon Elihu's part, but kept in view a comment of his own, upon that wiſh of Job's, with which his part concludes, he would have ſeen on which ſide, all the parade laid, and the reaſons too of it's lying there; *O*, ſays Job, *that the Almighty would anſwer me, and that mine adverſary had written a book!* Upon theſe words, he obſerves and pertinently too, that Job here demands of God, to pronounce ſentence on the cauſe he had been pleading, that the bill which had been preferred againſt him, might be diſmiſſed in proper form, and he have the glory of having gained a verdict in his favor [f]. A clear proof of the part he had been acting.

Quintilian's comment, upon that figure of the rhetoricians, called the Προσωποποιια, or the introducing of feigned perſons into an oration, ſets this matter in a very intelligible view; for theſe ſays he, give a wonderful variety as well as ſublimity to an oration: by theſe we draw forth the ſentiments of the adverſary, by repreſenting him

[d] Calmet ſur Ch. xxxii. 1.
[e] Ch. xxx. viii. 2.
[f] Calmet ſur. Ch. xxxi. 35.

ſpeaking as it were, to himſelf, which ſentiments appear the more natural, if we make him ſpeak only ſuch things, as it is not abſurd to ſuppoſe him to have thought, and introduce our own converſation with other people, and other people's with themſelves, but with an air of probability, and give them perſons proper for either perſuading, reproving, complaining, commending or compaſſionating, juſt as the exigency of the oration requires [g].

But it is I am ſenſible, more than time to put an end to the reader's trouble, and ſhall therefore cloſe this ſubject with an obſervation or two, formed upon a ſlight review, of what has paſſed in the courſe of our examination of the book before us; a book, which has proved the diſgrace of the tranſlators, the reproach of commentators, and the plague of paraphraſts.

If we conſider it in the light ſome writers place it, as real hiſtory, we muſt not be ſurprized to find our ſelves involved in almoſt as many difficulties, not to ſay abſurdities, as there are pages in the book, for it is inconceivable, that even that part of it, which we are ſometimes tempted to think hiſtorical, relates real or hiſtorical facts; the moſt that can be ſaid of it is, that the baſis is hiſtorical, and that the facts related, are neither improbable nor abſurd; if they were, they would be juſt as bad materials for an allegorical compoſition, as for a real hiſtory; if they were not, they are ſufficient materials for the former, though not authentic vouchers enough for the latter.

The ſame obſervation holds equally good, with regard to the controverſial or dramatic part of the book; a converſation maintained in the ſtile and manner there repreſented, is full as inconceivable, if conſidered on the literal or hiſtoric plan, as the facts themſelves [h]; the converſation between Dido and Æneas, at Carthage, or between Eneas and Anchiſes, in the Elyſian ſhades, in the very words and numbers that Virgil draws them, may be conceived and defended too, upon the ſelf-ſame principles, as part and parcel of Eneas's hiſtory, which if any man can perſuade himſelf of, they muſt be much more fond of diſputation than I am, and have more leiſure too, than I can find, that will enter the liſts to argue the point with him.

[g] Illa adhuc audaciora & majorum, ut Cicero exiſtimat, laterum, fictiones perſonarum, quæ Προσωποποιιαι dicuntur. Mire namque cum variant orationem tum excitant. His & adverſariorum cogitationes, velut ſecum loquentium, protrahimus: quæ tamen ita demum a fide non abhorrent, ſi ea locutos finxerimus, quæ cogitâſſe eos non ſit abſurdum; & noſtros cum aliis ſermones, & aliorum inter ſe, credibiliter introducimus, & ſuadendo, objurgando, querendo, laudando, & miſerando perſonas idoneas damus. Quintil. Juſt. Orat. L. 9. c. 2.

[h] See Coſtard's Obſervations on Job. p. 17.

But once ſuppoſe the book allegorical as well as dramatical, all thoſe difficulties vaniſh, and the rules of probability and decorum become the ſole ſtandards, of judging of the whole ſcope and propriety of the performance; if at the bottom of this allegory, the captive Jew lie ſhadowed, the ſingle rule of probability will decide the queſtion, whether in the perſonated character of Job, any thing be ſpoken; any doctrine advanced; any impiety ſuggeſted; or any argument maintained; which in the ſituation of the captive Jew, might not be ſuppoſed, without violation of probability.

The rule of decorum does the buſineſs in the other caſe, if the reſtoration of the captive Jew, in the perſon of Job, be as we ſay it is, the ſcope and buſineſs of the *drama*, all we have to do is, to conſider, how conſiſtently with dramatic rules, this great point is conducted; how properly the converſation is carried on; how fitly the incidents are contrived; how naturally the whole machinery of the poem, is working towards this grand cataſtrophe. Put theſe two rules together, and you ſee the beauty and drift of the poem, in all its full extent and latitude, for at the ſame time that probability is preſerved, and decorum maintained, the great object in view, of Job's reſtoration, upon the terms of his ſubmiſſion and repentance, is accompliſhed.

I am not aware of any other difficulty there is, in the conduct of this performance, except it be that ſingle one, of Job's being put upon the impatient, querulous and deſponding part, which he plainly is, in the *drama*, and of which I flatter myſelf, ſome tolerable account has been already given.

I ſhall cloſe the whole therefore with an obſervation of lord Bacon's upon this kind of repreſentation. "The pencil of the holy "Ghoſt hath labored more in deſcribing the afflictions of Job, than "the felicities of Solomon. Proſperity is not without many fears "and diſaſters, and adverſity is not without comforts and hopes. "We ſee in needle-works and embroideries, it is more pleaſing to "have a lively work, upon a ſad and ſolemn ground, than to have a "dark and melancholy work, upon a lightſome ground; judge there-"fore of the pleaſure of the heart, by the pleaſure of the eye. "Certainly, virtue is like precious odors, moſt fragrant, when they "are incenſed or cruſhed, for proſperity doth beſt diſcover vice, but "adverſity doth beſt diſcover virtue[k]."

[k] Lord Bacon's Eſſays. Vol. III. p. 306.

A SER-

The reader is desired to correct some errors in the book; as follows.

	for	read
PAGE 31. last line.	in them.	at the mills.
Notes.	ἐυθει. Ἐυθειλων.	ὠθει. ὠθειλων.
p. 33. l. 1.	them.	it.
l. 2.	were.	was.
p. 64. l. 26.	remains.	remain.
p. 85. l. 3.	is.	are.
p. 89. last l.	proper.	dramatic.
p. 90. l. 12.	of Job seems.	of Job thus far seems.
p. 98. l. 14.	hath set a.	hath a set.
p. 120. Notes.	ἀπερρηθεν.	ἀπερρηξεν.
	ἐπιδειζαμενος.	ἐπιδειξαμενος.
p. 133. l. 12.	merchan.	merchandize.
p. 150. l. 8.	and he.	and if he.
p. 175. l. 5.	precise time.	nearly the time.
p. 203. l. 16.	of which was.	of which after.
l. 17.	or utter.	was the utter.
p. 205. l. 30.	J. Job.	Job.
p. 220. l. 31.	translation.	transaction.
p. 243. l. 16.	upon.	upon it.

☞ The last paragraph, p. 178. *The truth then is*, should have been placed at p. 183. before paragraph, *One therefore*.

A

SERMON

Preached before the

UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE,

ON

WEDNESDAY, *January* 8, 1745.

The Day appointed by Proclamation for a public Faſt.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is not from any ſuppoſed merit in the following ſermons, nor yet from any deſign of ſwelling the volume, that they are inſerted; but merely, becauſe they are all, upon the ſame ſubject, and were originally written, upon the ſame plan with the foregoing diſſertation, and may therefore be conſidered, as an epitome of the whole, reduced as it were, to practice. For which reaſons, I choſe to publiſh them, rather than an *Anglyſis* of the whole book, which I had been ſome time preparing, but have not leiſure at preſent, to finiſh; and think in the mean time, theſe ſermons calculated, to give ſome general notion, of what is more particularly diſcuſſed, in the larger work.

PREFACE.

IT is now ſeven years ago, ſince I preached before the Univerſity from the ſame text, when I treated of the words, as all the Commentators had done before me, in their primary and literal ſenſe, ſuſpecting, I own, at that time, no Allegory, but conſidering the facts, a Feaſt and a Sacrifice.

What reaſons I have ſince found to alter my opinion the reader will ſoon ſee, and what put me upon the enquiry I ſhall frankly tell him: 'twas Mr. Warburton's *ingenious examination of the book of* Job[a], *which I no ſooner peruſed, than I determined to try the ſame experiment upon the* Narrative, *that he had done with ſo much ſucceſs upon the* Drama, *concluding that if this too ſucceeded, there would then be little doubt of the* Allegory.

In the courſe of this enquiry the two circumſtances of the deſcent made upon Job *by the* Chaldees, *in the opening of his diſtreſs, and his living juſt one hundred and forty years after the* Lord's turning again his captivity, *were too promiſing a clue to be quitted on account of any little difficulties that might ariſe in the application of the reſt to the* Babyloniſh captivity: *and though the* fire of the Lord, *and the* great wind from the Wilderneſs *ſeemed incidents inexplicable when ſeparately conſidered, yet when brought together and applied to this one event, they turned out to be, what I all along ſuſpected, only ſo much beautiful imagery with which the author had diverſified the ſcene, and thereby aggravated the diſtreſs. There is ſcarce a* Prophet[b] *who has not deſcribed the army of the* Chaldees *under this figure of a whirlwind, nor is there a figure ſo expreſſive of all the calamities of war as a ſtorm or a tempeſt.*

The Poet has given us a moſt beautiful deſcription of the havock produced by one of theſe dry winds.*

Regna videt pauper *Naſamon* errantia vento
Diſcuſſaſque domos: volitantque a culmine raptæ,
Detecto Garamante, caſæ. non altius ignis
Rapta vehit: quantumque licet conſurgere fumo,
Et violare diem, tantum tenet aera pulvis. *Lucan Pharſal.* l. ix. ℣. 458.

[a] Divine Legation vol. 2[d]. part. 2[d].
[b] Ezek. i. 5. Iſ. v. 28. Jer. iv. 13. Zech. vii. 14. *&c.*
* *non imbriferam* cum torto pulvere nubem ℣. 455.

But

But how happily ſoever the Allegory had hitherto ſucceeded, there yet remained a difficulty more formidable than either the Fire of the Lord, *or the* great Wind from the Wilderneſs. *The deſcent of the* Sabeans *had plainly no foundation in the hiſtory of the* Babyloniſh captivity, *and yet upon examination, it proved a circumſtance of no ſmall weight in confirming our application of the whole to the* Jews; *for, if we conſider but the ſituation of* Judæa, *'twill be a very probable account of this matter, that the* Sabeans *were a flying ſquadron from* Arabia *that infeſted the confines of that country, a people, like the modern* Arabs, *thieviſh and treacherous, too ſavage and diſſolute in their own manners, and too averſe to the ſeverity of the* Jewiſh *to be good neighbours*[c]. *In fact they were one of the many inſtruments in the hands of providence for chaſtizing the wickedneſs of that people, for we are told that* the Lord ſtirred up the ſpirit of the *Arabians*, that were near the *Ethiopians*, and they came up unto *Judah*, and brake into it, and carried away all the ſubſtance that was in the King's houſe, and his ſons alſo, and his wives[d]; *A circumſtance which it is more than probable is alluded to in the paſſage before us.*

Upon this plan there may be given a very ſatisfactory ſolution of a difficulty ſtarted by Mr. Le Clerc[e], *and ſince retailed by the Author of* Chriſtianity as old as the Creation:[f] " *De repreſenter* Dieu *permettant au Démon* " *de frapper* Job *dans ſa propre perſonne, aprés lui avoir ôté tout ſon bien,* " *et ce qu'il avoit plus cher au monde; Qui peut concevoir que* Dieu *traite* " *une homme de la ſorte, ſeulement pour confondre le* Démon, *et pour faire voir* " *au* Démon *que* Job *etoit veritablement pieux?*" *The learned author of* Scripture vindicated, *ſaw how hard it was to get rid of this difficulty on the* literal *ſcheme, and therefore ſuggeſted the true anſwer upon the* figurative; " *after all,* ſays he, *I prefer the figurative conſtruction in the preſent inſtance,* " *and am of opinion that the book of* Job *is of the* dramatic *kind relating* " *true hiſtory, but curiouſly ſet off in a* poetic *dreſs*[g]". *What that* true hiſtory *is, we have only to lament that ſo great a maſter of* ſacred antiquity *found not leiſure to inform the world; The deſign of theſe ſheets is to ſhew, that 'tis the hiſtory of the* Jews *juſt before and after their captivity: And if perhaps in the application of the* Feaſts *mentioned in the text*

[c] Valida ac ſolito inter accolas odio infenſa *Judæis Arabum* manus. *Tacit.* Hiſt. l. 5. [d] 2 Chron. xxi. 16. [e] Sentimens de quelque Theolog. Holl. pag. 180. [f] Chriſtianity as old &c. pag. 253. [g] Scripture vindicated, 3d. part. p. 12.

to the Feaſt of Tabernacles *there appear more latitude than the ſeverity of a literal interpreter would indulge, 'tis a latitude which ariſes from the very nature of a* dramatic *performance: for what the learned author of the* Divine Legation *has obſerved with regard to the management of ſome other alluſions, holds particularly true of this, that "the ſhade, in which thoſe alluſions are left, will be ſo far from bringing the* reality *of them in queſtion, "that it will confirm their* reality; *it now appearing, that if an able "writer would, in ſuch a work, make alluſions to his own times, religion, "or people, it muſt be done in the moſt covert manner.*[h]"

How dark ſoever then this alluſion may ſeem to ſome, yet there is light enough, I am perſwaded, to diſcover that theſe Feaſts *were at leaſt ſome or other of the three great* Jewiſh Feaſts, *none of which concluded without a burnt offering*[i]; *and if the attentive reader, with this key along with him, ſhall, after all, be of opinion that it was that great* Feaſt *of the* Paſſover *kept by* good Joſiah *before the captivity, I ſhall not diſpute the point with him, as the main argument will not be affected by it. My reaſon for fixing it either to this feaſt, or to the feaſt of* Tabernacles *after the captivity is, that they appear to be two of the moſt conſiderable in their reſpective kinds; for of this the author of the book* of Chronicles *has obſerved that* there was no paſſover like to that kept in *Iſrael* from the days of *Samuel* the prophet, neither did all the kings of *Iſrael* keep ſuch a paſſover as *Joſiah* kept; *and of the other* Nehemiah *has remarked, that* ſince the days of *Joſhua* the ſon of *Nun* unto that day had not the children of *Iſrael* done ſo[k].

But, unfortunately to any glory I might have claimed in this diſcovery, Dr. Burnet *has obſerved upon this very paſſage, that* Job *in offering ſacrifices on this occaſion acted in contradiction to the law of* Moſes[l]; *but as this obſervation is built upon the old ſuppoſition, that he acted in this reſpect not as a* Levitical *prieſt, but as a* Patriarch *in quality of head of a family, it muſt ſtand or fall with the* literal *interpretation.*

Yet, whatever be the fate of this conjecture, this I dare promiſe my reader that he will find herein ſome amazing alluſions to the Jewiſh hiſtory, *their Prophets, and their circumſtances at this period. In the Margin I have inſerted ſuch notes as are deſigned to ſhew that* Job's *whole conduct under*

[h] Divine Legation V. 2. part 2. pag. 455. [i] Ἐστι δε ὑδιμια των Ἑορτων καθ ην ὐκ ὁλοκαυτωσιν. Joſeph. Ant. Lib. 3. c. 10. §. 6, [k] Nehem. viii. 16. 2 Chron. xxxv. 18. [l] Cum vir pius et veri numinis cultor fuerit, legi Moſaicæ contraivit in ſacrificiis faciendis. Archeol. Philoſ. pag. 265. Carpzovii Introd. ad Lib. Poet. Vet. Teſt. p. 44.

his diſtreſs is but one continued detail of Jewiſh cuſtoms *in the times of their mourning. Annexed too he will find ſome alluſions to one or two of the moſt extraordinary occurrencies in the whole* Jewiſh Hiſtory *much later than either* Moſes *or* Solomon *the reputed authors of this book. Theſe I have brought together in one view at the end, promiſing my ſelf that collected, as it were, to one point, they would ſtrike with greater force, than ſcattered, as they lie in the Sermon. But my chief deſign in this was to obviate the exceptions taken to this* Allegory *by ſome writers of the firſt name, from whom I find great diſinclination to differ in any point, and whoſe learned labors on this and other parts of* Scripture *call for every compliment ſhort of an implicit ſubſcription to their opinion.*

Nor can I quit this ſubject without communicating what appears to me upon the whole of this enquiry, that 'tis the tribe of Judah *in particular, that is ſhadowed in the character of* Job. *For whoever conſiders the ſtate of the* tribes *at their firſt diviſion, will find that this of* [m] Judah *was by far the greateſt of the twelve, that the inheritance allotted it was nearly equal to that of all the other tribes, and that whatever diminution it had ſuffered in the captivity, it grew and increaſed daily after it; and this again in ſo ſurprizing a manner, that in our* Saviour's *time and forty years after, when the* Jews *declared war againſt the* Romans, *it was once more one of the moſt powerful nations of* the Eaſt; *and if we take into the account of this tribe what the Prophet laments of it's communication with other nations, that Judah* had profaned the holineſs of the Lord, which he loved, and had married the daughter of a ſtrange God,[n] *it will give us a very high idea of that ingenious conjecture that* Job's *wife, in the ſcenical repreſentation of her, was a* pure Pagan.[o]

[m] See 3[d] Diſſ. annexed to the *Uſe and intent of Prophecy.* [n] Mal. ii. 12. [o] Divine Legation, p. 516.

JOB.	*JEWS.*
Chap. I. ℣. 4, 5. And the ſeven Sons of *Job* went and feaſted every one his day; — and when the days of their feaſting were gone about, *Job* ſent and ſanctified them, and roſe up early in the morning and offered burnt-offerings: — for *Job* ſaid, it may be my Sons have ſinned and curſed God in their hearts.	So all the Congregation of them that were come again out of the Captivity, kept the feaſt of Tabernacles ſeven days, and on the eighth was a ſolemn aſſembly;—and on the twenty and fourth day of the month, the children of *Iſrael* were aſſembled with faſting, and with ſackcloth, and with earth upon them; and the ſeed of *Iſrael* ſeparated themſelves from all ſtrangers, and ſtood and confeſſed their ſins and the ſins of their fathers. *Neh.* viii. ix.
℣. 5. He offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all.	Alſo the children of thoſe that had been carried away, which were come out of the captivity, offered burnt offerings unto the God of *Iſrael*, *twelve* bullocks for all *Iſrael*, — All this was a burnt-offering unto the Lord. *Ezra* viii, 35.
℣. 6. *&c.* Now there was a day when the Sons of God came to preſent themſelves before the Lord, and *Satan* came amongſt them: — And the Lord ſaid unto *Satan*, Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant *Job*, that there is none like him in the earth, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth evil? Then *Satan* anſwered, Does *Job* fear God for nought? — And the Lord ſaid unto *Satan*, Behold all that he hath is in thy power; — Behold he is in thine hand: but ſave his Life — So *Satan* went forth from the preſence of the Lord.	And he ſhewed me *Joſhua* the High-prieſt ſtanding before the Angel of the Lord, and *Satan* ſtanding at his right hand to reſiſt him. And the Lord ſaid unto *Satan*, The Lord rebuke thee O *Satan!* even the Lord, that hath choſen *Jeruſalem*, rebuke thee! Is not this a brand pluck'd out of the fire? — Now *Joſhua* was cloathed with filthy garments and ſtood before the Angel. *Zech.* iii. 13.
℣. 9, 10. Haſt thou not made an hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide, thou haſt bleſſed the works of his hand?	My beloved hath a Vineyard in a very fruitful hill, and he fenced it about, and planted it with the choiceſt vine, and built a tower in it. *Iſa.* v. 1.

The

JOB.	JEWS.
℣. 15. The *Sabeans* fell upon the oxen and aſſes and took them away and ſlew the ſervants with the edge of the ſword.	The *Arabians* came up unto *Judah*, and brake into it, and carried away all the ſubſtance that was found in the King's houſe. 2 *Chron.* xxi. 16.
℣. 16. The fire of the Lord, (*a great fire*) fell from heaven, and burnt up the ſheep, and the ſervants, and conſumed them.	*Nabuzaradan*, Captain of the guard, burnt up the houſe of the Lord, and the King's houſe, and all the houſes that were in *Jeruſalem*.
℣. 17. The *Chaldeans* made out three bands, and fell upon the camels and carry'd them away, and ſlew the ſervants with the edge of the ſword.	The Army of the *Chaldees* purſued after King *Zedekiah*, ſcattered his whole army and carried them, that eſcaped the ſword, captives away to *Babylon*.
℣. 19. A great wind from the wilderneſs ſmote the four corners of the houſe, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead.	And he brake down the walls of *Jeruſalem* round about, and ſlew their young men with the ſword, and had no compaſſion on young men or maidens. 2 *Chr.* xxxvi. 2 *Kings* xxv.
℣. 22. In all this, *Job* ſinned not, neither charged God fooliſhly.	In thoſe days and at that time, ſaith the Lord, the iniquity of *Iſrael* ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none, and the ſins of *Judah*, and they ſhall not be found. *Jer.* l. 13. 20. *compare Ezra* ch. iii. vi. *Neh.* ch. viii. ix.
Chap. II. ℣. 7. So *Satan* went forth from the preſence of God, and ſmote *Job* with ſore boyles from the ſole of his foot unto his crown.	From the ſole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no ſoundneſs but wounds and bruiſes and putrifying ſores, they have not been cloſed, neither bound up nor mollifyed with oyntment. *Iſ.* i. 6. *compare Jerem.* xxx. 12. and *Deut.* xxviii. 38.
℣. 11. Now when *Job*'s three friends heard this, they came every one from his own place, and they rent every one his mantle, and ſate down with him ſeven days and ſeven nights, and none ſpake a word unto him.	Then went I unto them of the captivity at *Tel-Abib*, that dwelt by the river *Chebar*, and I ſate where they ſate, and remained there *aſtoniſhed* among them ſeven days. *Ezech.* iii. 15. The Elders of the daughters of *Zion* ſit upon the ground and keep ſilence. *Lam.* c. ii. 10.

JOB.	JEWS.
Chap. XXXIII. *v.* 17,— That he may withdraw Man from his purpoſe, and hide pride from Man; he keepeth back his ſoul from the pit, and his life from periſhing by the ſword. He is chaſtened alſo with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with ſtrong pain: his ſoul draweth nigh unto the grave, and his life to the deſtroyers. If there be a meſſenger with him, an interpreter, one amongſt a thouſand, to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs; then he is gracious unto him, and ſaith, Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ranſom: his fleſh ſhall be freſher than a child's, he ſhall return to the days of his youth: he ſhall pray unto God, and he will be favorable unto him, and he ſhall ſee his face with joy.	In thoſe days was *Hezekiah* ſick unto death: and the Prophet *Iſaiah* the ſon of *Amoz* came to him, and ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith the Lord, Set thine houſe in order, for thou ſhalt die and not live. Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord— And it came to paſs, afore *Iſaiah* was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the Lord came unto him, ſaying, Turn again and tell *Hezekiah*, Thus ſaith the Lord, I have heard thy prayer and ſeen thy tears: behold I will heal thee; on the third day thou ſhalt go up to the houſe of the Lord. And *Iſaiah* ſaid, Take a lump of figs; and they took and laid it on the boyl, and he recovered. 2 *Kings* xx. 1.—
Chap. XXXVI. *v.* 8, — If Kings be bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affliction; then God ſheweth them their works, and their tranſgreſſion, that they have exceeded: he openeth alſo their ears to diſcipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity. If they obey and ſerve him, they ſhall ſpend their days in proſperity, and their years in pleaſure.	And the Lord ſpake to *Manaſſeh* and to his people; but they would not hearken: therefore the Lord brought upon him the captains of the hoſts of the King of *Aſſyria*, which took *Manaſſeh* among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to *Babylon*. And when he was in affliction he beſought the Lord his God, and humbled himſelf greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto him; and he was intreated of him, and heard his ſupplication, and brought him again to *Jeruſalem* into his kingdom. Then *Manaſſeh* knew that the Lord he was God. 2 *Chr.* xxxiii. 13.—

JOB.	*JEWS.*
Chap. XLII. ℣. 10. 11. The Lord turned the captivity of *Job*, and there came to him his brethren, — and they did eat bread with him in his own houſe.	Thus ſaith the Lord, Behold, I will bring again the captivity of *Jacob*'s tents, and have mercy upon his dwelling place, and her city ſhall be built upon her own heap, and the palace ſhall remain after its own manner. *Jer.* xxx. 12.
Alſo the Lord gave *Job* twice as much as he had before.	To day I declare I will render double unto thee. *Zech.* v. 12.
Every man alſo gave him a piece of money, and every one an ear-ring of gold.	And all they that were about them, ſtrengthened their hands with veſſels of ſilver, with gold, and with precious things. *Ezr.* i. 6.
℣. 12, 13. So the Lord bleſſed the latter end of *Job* more than his beginning, for he had fourteen thouſand ſheep, and ſix thouſand camels, and a thouſand yoke of oxen, and a thouſand ſhe aſſes. He had alſo ſeven Sons and three Daughters.	Thus ſaith the Lord, The glory of the latter houſe ſhall be greater than the glory of the former. *Hagg.* ii. 9. I will multiply them, and they ſhall not be few; I will alſo glorify them, and they ſhall not be ſmall. Their children alſo ſhall be as aforetime, and their congregation ſhall be eſtabliſhed before me. *Jer.* xxx. 19. 20.
℣. 17. After this *Job* lived an hundred and forty years, and ſaw his Sons Sons, even four Generations.	There ſhall yet old Men and old Women dwell in the ſtreets of *Jeruſalem*, and every Man with his ſtaff in his hand for very Age: and the ſtreets of the City ſhall be full of Boys and Girls playing in the ſtreets thereof. *Zech.* viii. 4, 5.

JOB chap. 1. ver. 5.

And it was ſo, when the days of their feaſting were now gone about, that Job ſent and ſactified them, and roſe up early in the morning and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all: for Job ſaid, It may be that my ſons have ſinned and curſed God in their hearts; thus did Job continually.

AT a time, when we are aſſembled in the houſe of God, to humble our ſelves in the divine preſence for our manifold ſins, I know not, how we ſhall employ our thoughts more advantageouſly for our own improvement, or more ſuitably to the ſolemnity of this ſeaſon, than in taking a view of ſuch portions of holy writ, as ſeem to bear ſome reſemblance to it, and remarking upon the conduct of holy men of old, in emergencies of the like nature.

In this view it was, that the book of Job was received very early into the jewiſh church; ſome portion of it was conſtantly read in all ſeaſons of public humiliation, and afterwards the church of Chriſt adopted it into its canon, and conſecrated it with all the veneration due to an inſpired writeing.

The narrative is conciſe and affecting, preſents us with great variety of diſtreſs, and yet with an amazing uniformity of character; it exhibits a great man laboring under the greateſt difficulties, yet ſuperior to them all; tried in all the moſt delicate and tender inſtances of domeſtic happineſs, yet emerging out of every tryal with the utmoſt propriety; attacked in one quarter of his eſtate, by the Sabeans, in another, by the Chaldeans, in a third, by the fire of God, and in the fourth, by a whirlwind; ſtript in one day, of all his fortunes, and bereaved of all his children; ſtill retaining his integrity, neither peeviſhly murmuring, nor yet charging God fooliſhly.

Neither was his economy leſs remarkable than his patience; in the relation of a parent in particular, we find him tender and pious, ever watchfull over his children's conduct, at the ſame time that he indulged them in the little innocent liberties of ſocial entertainment, happy in obſerving their mirth and good nature at thoſe chearful meetings, yet jealous at the ſame time, of any indiſcretions that might hazard their innocence. Of this the text preſents us with a notable inſtance: "There were born unto him ſeven ſons and three daughters, and his ſons went and feaſted every man his day, and called for their three ſiſters to eat and to drink with them, and when the days of their feaſting were now gone about, Job ſent and ſanctified them and roſe up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all, for Job ſaid, it may be that my ſons have ſinned and curſed God in their hearts."

There is ſuch a mixture of piety and humanity, in his behaviour upon this occaſion, ſuch a conflict between paternal tenderneſs and paternal authority, between the reaſonable indulgence due on the one hand, to his children, and the obedience due to God, on the other; ſo tender is he of diſobliging either, and yet ſo firmly reſolved to preſerve above all things, their reverence to their maker, that it will furniſh matter of very uſeful inſtruction to us, to take a more diſtinct view of this incident, and to examine all the ſeveral parts and principles of it.

Firſt then, let us obſerve the particular ſeaſon and occaſion of his offering the burnt-offerings; and that appears to be "When the days "of his ſon's feaſting were gone about."

It was a ſtanding rule and cuſtom, we learn, among his ſons, to make an entertainment every man upon his birth-day, and it is more than probable that in this practice, they had not only their father's preſence and conſent, but his direction and approbation; ſuch a meeting, and on ſuch an occaſion, could be liable to no cenſure or exception, ſo long as it was carried on with decency, and conducted in a way of joy and thankfullneſs; our Saviour himſelf thought it no diſpa-

paragement to him, to be preſent at a marriage feaſt in Cana of Galilee, and even vouchſafed to ſupply the want of wine at it by a miracle; and the primitive Chriſtians we know, had their love-feaſts, as well as the Jews their three great annual ones; all intended for the cheriſhing of unity and concord, all deſigned to bring together the ſcattered members of their communion, and to commemorate the many inſtances of God's favor and protection, with praiſe and thankſgiving.

To a tender indulgent parent what pleaſure muſt it adminiſter, to ſee his ſons live together in ſuch unity and friendſhip, as to meet at one another's houſe with unanimity and gladneſs, to feaſt every man his day with chearfullneſs and temperance, and to call for their three ſiſters to partake with them? If the fatted calf muſt be killed, and muſick and dancing prepared at the return of the prodigal ſon, it was allowable to make merry and be glad upon this occaſion, and ſo long as the rules of temperance were not infringed, many wiſe and good ends might be anſwered by ſuch meetings. Thus we read in ſcripture, the excuſe that David left with Jonathan to make to Saul was, that "if thy "father at all miſs me, then ſay, David earneſtly aſked leave of me, "that he might return to Bethlehem his city, for there is a yearly feaſt for all the family." Beſides the great public feaſts, at which the whole congregation of Iſrael attended, they had theſe family entertainments too, at which were preſent none but kinsfolk and relations; that ſo, if any diſcord or miſunderſtandings, had aroſe among them, they might be reconciled to each other in the moſt friendly manner, at their own table, and in preſence of their own family.

But leaſt perchance, this had not been the caſe with them, leaſt an entertainment of ſo long continuance, might perhaps have betrayed them into any levities or indiſcretions, unbecoming the ſons of ſo religious a father, we may obſerve in the Second place, the reaſons the text aſſigns, for his offering the burnt-offerings, "It may be," ſays he, notwithſtanding all my council and precaution, "that my ſons have "ſinned and curſed God in their hearts." He was ſenſible, that the heat of blood, the ſtrength of wine, and the looſe given to the paſſions in the gaiety of thoſe entertainments, might endanger the morals, as well as the conſtitutions of the gueſts, and tempt them perhaps to vi-

olate the chaſtneſs of converſation, at the ſame time they tranſgreſſed the rules of ſobriety; that from fooliſh talking and jeſtings not convenient, the ſtep was neither great nor uncommon to profaneneſs and blaſphemy, and that therefore, both the authority and the piety of a parent were concerned in calling upon them, to review their conduct, with all the ſeverity of men conſcious, that they were to give an account to God of every idle word, as well as of every ſinfull action.

It was indeed the profane reply of the high prieſt and elders to Judas, when he told them that he had ſinned, "What is that to us? "ſee thou to that." As if they had no ſhare in the guilt ſo long as they had no hand in the ſin; but far otherwiſe were the ſentiments of this good man: upright and perfect as he himſelf was, he thought it not ſufficient to be wrapt up in his own private virtue, but felt a generous concern for the welfare of his dependents: convinced that the ſouls of all men ſhould be dear to him, in proportion to the relation he bore to them, he begins with his own children, and calls upon them to confeſs and forſake their ſins, and, in quality of prieſt as well as parent, in his own family, offers burnt-offerings according to the number of them all.

How rational, how religious his behaviour upon this occaſion? for whatever indolence or impiety may ſuggeſt to the contrary, certain it is, that every man is chargeable with the moral conduct of his dependants, and, in proportion to his ſituation in the world, will find himſelf accountable for their actions as well as his own; "Am I my broer's keeper?" was the inſolent queſtion of Cain; yes ſurely he was ſo, and ſo is every good man his brother's keeper, in ſome ſenſe, becauſe highly intereſted and concerned in his welfare and happineſs; for if conſidered merely as a man, he will be anſwerable for all thoſe ſins and impieties in other perſons, which either his own evil council and example had occaſioned, or his influence and advice might infallibly have prevented.

If conſidered as a maſter, he will be reſponſible for the behaviour of his ſervants and dependants, and every miſcarriage of theirs, owing to his negligence or irregularities, will lie at his door. If conſidered as a parent, as the relation grows ſtill more dear, becauſe ſtill more near

to

to him, ſo too will his account encreaſe in the ſame proportion, and of conſequence, every error either in point of faith or practice, proceeding from evil inſtruction or example, or, what is pretty much the ſame thing, from the want of good ones, where it was poſſible to have given them, will be placed to his account, and himſelf, in ſome ſenſe, be deemed the author of them.

In this light therefore, every good man will be ſolicitous about other mens ſouls as well as his own, will naturally think himſelf to bear ſome ſhare in their ſins and delinquencies, as well as in their virtues and good qualities, obliged therefore to look well to their behaviour, to prevent them from falling into ſin by his council, to reſtrain them by his authority, or if all theſe fail, to expiate their offences by his prayers; thus did Job continualy. Such was the good man, to whom the ſcriptures have bore this peculiar teſtimony, "that he "was a good man and perfect, one that feared God, and eſchewed evil."

Early in the morning, the proper ſeaſon for devotion and recollection, he ſent and ſanctified them, *i. e.* he ſent an admonition to each of them, that by faſting and prayer, they might purifie themſelves for the ſacrifices he was about to offer for them, to review their conduct with carefulneſs and ſincerity, and come prepared to addreſs themſelves to God, with hearts and minds deeply ſenſible of every offence, in thought, word, and deed againſt his divine majeſty; to acknowledge and bewail thoſe manifold ſins and wickedneſſes, by which they might probably have provoked his wrath and indignation againſt them; earneſtly to repent and heartily to be ſorry for them; and finally, to implore the divine pardon and forgiveneſs for paſt tranſgreſſions, and his bleſſing upon all their future conduct.

Here began, and here too continued all his care and concern for them, happy in keeping up a ſenſe of God and religion in his family, in ſuch acts of religious worſhip, as were expreſſive of their dependence upon him. This, were there no other account to be given of the words before us, were a ſufficient juſtification of our choice of them at this ſeaſon, when we are called upon by the fathers of our church, to offer

up

up the ſacrifices of a broken and contrite heart for the ſins of this nation, and conſidered barely in this view, upon the face of Job's ſtory, would ſuggeſt many noble inferences to our meditations, upon the ſtate of public as well as private virtue in the world.

But if perchance, under the character of Job, ſhould be ſhadowed the character of the whole Jewiſh people, if under his ſufferings and reſtoration to his former fortunes, the captivity of Judah and Jeruſalem, and the return of the tribes from Babylon ſhould chance to be figured; if the burnt-offerings in the text ſhould prove, on examination, to be offered up for the ſins of the whole Jewiſh people, ſuch a diſcovery would produce a ſtill more promiſing likeneſs to the preſent ſolemnity.

Did the alluſions indeed to the Jewiſh hiſtory, require either art or violence, to adjuſt them to the hiſtory of Job, it might well remain a doubt, whether, after all, they had any ſuch intention; but when the one deſcribes the Chaldeans falling upon Job's herds and flocks and "carrying them away, and ſlaying the ſervants with the edge of "the ſword," and the other informs us, "that the army of the "Chaldees purſued after king Zedekiah, ſcattered his whole army, "and carried them, that eſcaped the ſword, captives away to Baby-"lon;" when the author of the book of Job, repreſents the fire of the Lord (a great fire) burning up all the ſheep and ſervants and conſuming them, and the author of the ſecond book of kings acquaints us that "Naburazadan captain of the guard, burnt up the houſe of "the Lord, and the king's houſe, and all the houſes that were in Je-"ruſalem;" when the "great wind from the wilderneſs, in Job, "ſmote the four corners of the houſe, ſo that it fell" and buried his children in the ruins, and the army of the Chaldees, in the Chronicles, ſtiled expreſly by the prophet, "the dry wind from the wil-"derneſs, brake down the walls of Jeruſalem round about, and ſlew "their young men with the ſword, and had no compaſſion on young "men or maidens;"—when all theſe circumſtances correſpond ſo very exactly, they muſt form at leaſt a preſumption, that ſomething of this kind is ſhadowed in the ſufferings of Job.

But

But ſhould we enter ſtill deeper iuto his misfortunes, and obſerve that beſides the attack made upon his fortunes and family, his very perſon was " ſmitten with boyls from the ſole of his foot to the crown " of his head;" and ſhould this too prove the very deſcription given of the Jews at this period, that " from the ſole of the foot even to " the head there were wounds and bruiſes, and putrifying ſores;" ſhould the boyl on Job's perſon turn out to be the very botch, threatned by Moſes upon their diſobedience, and that again from " from " head to foot;" ſhould Job's rending his mantle, and ſhaving his head on this occaſion, be the very image the prophet has given us on the captivity of the Jews, " cut off thine hair, O Jeruſalem! and take " up thy lamentation!" and his ſitting on the ground ſeven days with his three friends in ſullen ſilence, anſwer to that deſcription, "the el- " ders of the daughters of Zion ſit on the ground and keep ſilence;" it muſt be confeſſed it would add no ſmall weight on our ſuſpicion.

But here occurs a difficulty, that has equally perplexed all the commentators both on the literal and allegorical plan. Job's ſitting with his friends on the ground ſeven days, is a circumſtance itſelf extraordinary, but " none of them ſpeaking a word to him" in all that time is much more ſo: yet when theſe ſeven days turn out the very accuſtomed time of mourning among the Jews, and the circumſtance itſelf ſtands recorded in Exekiel, " Then came I unto them of the " captivity of Tel-abib, that dwelt by the river Chebar, and I ſate " where they ſate, and remained there aſtoniſhed among them ſeven " days:" the reſolution of that difficulty would be found to lie in a very narrow compaſs. 'Tis the very diſtreſs that the Pſalmiſt has painted in ſuch lively colors: " By the waters of Babylon we ſate " down and wept, where we remembered thee O Sion! as for our " harps, we hanged them up upon the trees that were therein: for " they that led us away captive, required of us then a ſong and melody " in our heavineſs, ſing us one of the ſongs of Sion! how ſhall we " ſing the Lord's ſong in a ſtrange land?"

If again, the turning of the captivity of Job be the very phraſe uſed by all the Jewiſh writers for their return from Babylon; if his receiving

ceiving "twice as much as he had before," be no more than what the prophet had told them in other words "To day I declare I will render "double unto thee;" if the preſents his friends made him, of "every "one a piece of money and an ear-ring of gold," ſhould prove the very preſents the Jews of Babylon made their brethren in Judea, "veſſels of ſilver, and gold, and precious things; were God's "bleſſing the latter end of Job more than the beginning," compared with that prediction, "The glory of the latter houſe ſhall be greater "than the glory of the former;" were the vaſt increaſe of his herds and flocks, conſidered but in the ſame light, with what the prophet had ſaid, "Behold I will bring again the captivity of Jacob, and I will "multiply them, and they ſhall not be few, and I will alſo glorify "them, and they ſhall not be ſmall;" ſhould the number of his children, juſt the ſame now as before his diſtreſs, be the very deſcription we have of them in Jeremiah, "Their children alſo ſhall be as "aforetime, and their congregation ſhall be eſtabliſhed before me; "ſhould the one hundred and forty years, that Job lived after the "turning of his captivity" be juſt double the time the Jews were captives in Babylon.—Put but all theſe things together, view the deſcriptions given of the Jews by their prophets, and their pourtrait drawn in the book of Job, and then ſurely the likeneſs will be too glaring to leave any doubt of the original.

Here indeed we are told, that "in all this Job ſinned not, neither "charged God fooliſhly:" a circumſtance, which it will be ſaid perhaps, has no foundation in the hiſtory of the Jews at this period, ſince it is certain that their captivity was the puniſhment of their ſins. It was ſo, but this hinders not why after their captivity they might not return to duty; and that in fact they did ſo is manifeſt from hiſtory, for from this time they were more zealous in the obſervance of their law, and more faithful in the practice of their duty, than at any time before. What the prophet had foretold in this reſpect, "In thoſe days "and at that time the iniquity of Iſrael ſhall be ſought for and there "ſhall be none, and the ſins of Judah and they ſhall not be found," was at this time, moſt remarkably accompliſhed in the moral character of that people, their long captivity having cured them of their propenſity

ſity to idolatry, and rendered them deeply ſenſible of thoſe ſins which had brought down ſo grievous a puniſhment upon them.

But if after all, we diſpute the likeneſs contended for, the Devil's expoſtulation with God upon the particular circumſtances of Job may help to convince us of it. "Does Job fear God for nought? Haſt "thou not made an hedge round about him, and about all that he "hath? and is not this the very image, the prophet hath given us of jewiſh ſituation, "My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruit-"ful hill, and he fenced it about, and planted it with the choiceſt "vines, and built a tower in it;" and leaſt the Jews ſhould miſtake their own picture, he tells them, "the vineyard of the Lord of hoſts "is the houſe of Iſrael, and the men of Judah his pleaſant plant."

Thus minutely does every circumſtance, in the hiſtorical part of the book of Job, ſeem to fall in with the accounts given in ſcripture, of the people of the Jews; and if perhaps in the poetical part of the compoſition, the alluſions be ſo highly touched and ſo deeply ſhaded as to eſcape all but the moſt attentive reader, it muſt reflect no ſmall credit upon the late diſcoveries of a very ingenious author, who from the internal character of the performance itſelf, and the nature of the argument therein handled, by Job and his three friends, has fixed the lateſt poſſible date of this book, ſomewhere between the time of the approaching captivity of the Jews, and their thorough eſtabliſhment in Judea.

As it is no part of my deſign to examin the drama of this book, I have only to add on this ſubject, that the date he has fixed, ſeems to be the very date, the author meant to give his performance. For who that compares the books of Nehemiah and Ezra, with the incident mentioned in the text, but muſt obſerve the moſt ſtrikeing likeneſs between the feaſt of tabernacles, kept by the Jews juſt after their return from Babylon, and the feaſts kept by the ſeven ſons of Job. "And there were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the "people, and the prieſts and the Levites unto Ezra the ſcribe, to un-"derſtand the law of the Lord, and they found written in the law of

" Moſes, that the children of Iſrael ſhould dwell in booths in the " feaſt of the ſeventh month; ſo all the congregation of them, that " were come again out of the captivity, made them booths and ſate " therein, and they kept the feaſt ſeven days, and on the eighth was " a ſolemn aſſembly after the manner." What that manner was, we ſhall beſt learn from Moſes, who inſtituted it, " On the eighth day " ſhall be an holy convocation, and ye ſhall offer an offering made " by fire unto the Lord."

Sould not this be thought to come up to the extraordinary ſolemnity in the text, we may go on to the very next chapter, and there we ſhall find that in the twenty and fourth day of this month, namely two days after the holy convocation, " the children of Iſrael were " aſſembled with faſting and with ſackcloth, and with earth upon " them, and the ſeed of Iſrael ſeparated themſelves from all ſtrangers, " and ſtood and confeſſed their ſins and the ſins of their fathers." And if the practice of the later Jews, be any comment upon the old ceremonial, it will be a moſt notable confirmation of this our conjecture, that the German Jews at this day, after the feaſt of tabernacles, faſt three days: eſpecially if the foundation aſſigned for this cuſtom, be the true one, that it is founded on their apprehenſions, that as the preceding feaſts were of eight days continuance, they might perhaps have offended God during that time: and this, in plain terms, is the very reaſon ſuggeſted in the text, " It may be my ſons have ſinned and " curſed God in their hearts."

Should it now be aſked, what have we to do with the captivities of Judah and Jeruſalem? Or, how ſhall any arguments drawn from a particular providence in the jewiſh church, affect us, conſidered either as chriſtians or proteſtants; the anſwer is ſhort as it is obvious, the general maxim, that righteouſneſs exalteth a nation, holds juſt as good in the preſent ſyſtem of religion and policy, as in the other, and is juſt as true of chriſtan people, as it ever was of the jewiſh, that iniquity muſt be their ruin.

And he muſt have made but ſlender obſervations, either on the ſtate of the chriſtian world in general, or of our own national church in par-

ti-

ticular, who ſees not an amazing reſemblance, between the judgements in theſe, and the viſitations of thoſe. What the prophet laments of Zion, that ſhe was left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cowcumbers, deſerted and forlorn, that ſtrangers devoured her land in her preſence, is but too ſad a truth, of the very country, where chriſtianity had its firſt footing, inhabited now no longer by chriſtians, but ravaged by infidels: not the leaſt remains of chriſtian faith, or chriſtian liberty left among them. This is the caſe with it in thoſe countries.

In others, how is the faithful city become an harlot? debauched in her morals, and proſtitute in her diſcipline, and wholly given up to idolatry. In our own, how oft has providence in a moſt marvelous manner, interpoſed to reſcue this church and nation, by turns, from fanatic frenzy and popiſh ſuperſtition? The more than egyptian bondage, ſhe had laid under before the reformation, was happily retrieved in the ſucceſs of that moſt glorious work; yet what efforts has the reſtleſs ſpirit of popery ever ſince been making, to carry us away captives once more to Rome? Paſs but a reign from that period, we find it wantoning in all the inſolence of power, under a bigot queen; embarqued ſoon after, in an invincible armada, to dethrone her glorious ſucceſſor; attempting afterwards by ſap, what was not to be carried by ſtorm; and at length, entrenched behind the throne its-ſelf; but yeſterday, embarqued again, to repeat her hoſtile invaſions.

How light ſoever, the diſtance of former deliverances from our own times, may have made the impreſſions in the preſent generation, yet ſure, there is no man will ſay, that it was either the formidableneſs of our fleets, or the ſtrength and number of our forces, and not the providence of him, who commands the winds and the ſeas, that defeated the intended enterprize.

Yet in full conviction of all theſe deliverances, are we become the better men in any reſpect, for them? Are we really better in the private ſtations of life, better neighbours, better ſubjects, or better chriſtians? — Under the beſt-framed government in the world, the

wiſeſt laws, and the exacteſt adminiſtration of public juſtice, do we ſhew our ſenſe of ſuch bleſſings, by the exactneſs of our obedience? Or under all thoſe means of grace, which the goſpel has imparted to us, do we in fact, order our converſation ſo as it becometh the goſpel of Chriſt?

If not—What ſecurity have we, that our enemies may not one day come and take from us both our place and nation? What aſſurance, that our long unfruitfulneſs under thoſe means of grace, may not bring at length, the axe to the root of the tree itſelf, and the ſentence not be peremptory, cut it down, why cumbreth it the ground? In this reſpect it is to be feared, that much the ſame account is to be given of us chriſtians, as their hiſtorian have given of the Jews, at the period we have been ſpeaking of. "The Lord God of their fa-
"thers ſent to them by his meſſengers, riſing up early, and ſending
"them, becauſe he had compaſſion on his people and on his dwelling
"place.—But they mocked the meſſenger of God, and deſpiſed his
"words, and miſuſed his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord aroſe
"againſt his people, till there was no remedy.—Therefore he brought
"upon them the army of the Chaldees."

This indeed, we may reaſonably promiſe our ſelves, will not be the caſe with us, merely on the ſcore of thoſe little ſlips and foibles, from which the beſt of men are not free; but the end it muſt be, of all that profaneneſs and immorality, which is ſo barefaced amongſt us; for what elſe is the life of moſt chriſtians at this day? Is there not as much pride and ambition, as much inſolence and oppreſſion even among moſt chriſtian princes? as much luxury and corruption, among all orders and degrees of men, as if there were no ſuch religion as chriſtianity in it?

Upon the morals of our own nation in particular, what have been the effects of a long peace, not very auſpicious indeed in its firſt moments? In thoſe days of our feaſting, when each man ſate under his own vine, and his own fig-tree, did we confine our ſelves within the bounds of innocence and moderation; was the ſtate of private humility

or

or piety, of economy or virtue, ſuch as might promiſe us a continuance of our happineſs? " Did not we ſay within ourſelves, we ſhall ſurely " die in our neſts, and multiply our days as the ſand, to morrow " ſhall be as this day and much more abundant?" Such was the ſecurity, we flattered ourſelves withall, and in proportion to that ſecurity, improved our wantonneſs.

But perhaps, a ſeven years war has at length convinced us, of what more than twenty years peace could not, that there is no greater bleſſing under heaven, nothing that bids more fair to national commerce, liberty, or virtue, than peace and good neighbourhood; we have now tried the alternative, yet has not our ſucceſs been anſwerable to our wiſhes; we have been told from the throne, " that ſome things have " fallen out ſo much to the diſadvantage of the common cauſe, as will " demand all our attention to retrieve," and call for all our prayers too, to remove the ill effects of them.

Yet what will moſt of all conduce, towards retrieving that ancient ſpirit and virtue, for which the annals of this nation once ſtood diſtinguiſhed, will be the one grand doctrine, which the text ſuggeſts in every view of it; that the reformation of that univerſal depravity of manners, which after all, it is more eaſy to lament than reform, muſt begin at home, in the diſcipline and reformation of private families.

Whatever may be the practice of the world in this reſpect, the principle moſt univerſally received in it, is certainly a noble and a right one, that it is private virtue only, that can give dignity and reputation to any character, and if there be any ſuch thing in it, as public virtue, it is but the collective virtue of individuals. St. Paul therefore has begun, where indeed all reformation muſt begin in order to paſs with credit and ſucceſs, through the lower orders of mankind, with the heads and governors of them, and has laid it down as one of the firſt eſſentials in the character of a biſhop, that " he be one that ruleth well " his own houſe, having his children in ſubjection with all gravity;" and his concluſion upon this head, will deſerve the attention of all governors and rulers of the world, in every capacity, " if a man know not

" not how to rule his own houſe, how ſhall he take care of the church
" of Chriſt?

How ſhall the intereſts of either virtue or good policy, thrive in the world, if thoſe, who are to give it weight and authority, by their example, be the firſt that deſert it? how ſhall the vulgar learn to obey, honor, and reverence their governors, and that, not only for wrath but alſo for conſcience ſake, if they be not miniſters unto them for good; if the whole courſe and tenor of their private life, as well as of their public adminiſtration, be not conducted by the niceſt rules of prudence and virtue? This is certain; whatever may be the obedience paid to power and dominion, it is the obedience only of ſlaves, and not the reaſonable ſervice of free agents; it is not to be relied upon, like that obedience, which has its foundation in authority, and is paid on account of the opinion men have conceived, of the wiſdom, goodneſs, and piety of their governors. This, like the oyl of old, that was poured on Aaron's beard, runs down to the very ſkirts of their cloathing, diffuſing itſelf through all the lower ranks and orders of mankind, through every relation and ſituation of life.

What rulers and magiſtrates are, in the larger ſpheres of government, that are parents and heads of families, in the ſmaller ones of domeſtic diſcipline; perhaps indeed from theſe, as their true originals, have been copied all, or moſt of the maxims of public government; but however that matter ſtand, this again is certain; that all parental authority, all the true regard and deference paid to parents, has for its foundation, an opinion of great wiſdom, goodneſs and piety.

" When the children of ſuch a parent, find him continually inſtruct-
" ing them, what qualities are good and what are ill, for their health
" and life and common ſociety; leſſons which comprehend every
" thing we call virtue or vice among men cheriſhing and encourag-
" ing diſpoſitions to the good, disfavoring and puniſhing thoſe to
" the evil; when they find him, among the various accidents of life,
" lifting up his eyes to heaven, and having recourſe to a higher and
" greater nature, whenever he finds the weakneſs and frailty of his
" own

" own; this muſt naturally beget in them, the deepeſt ſenſe of his authority, goodneſs, and piety; muſt diſpoſe them of courſe, to believe " what he teaches, to follow what he adviſes, and obey what he " commands."

This of courſe too, muſt prepare and diſpoſe children, when they themſelves become parents and governors, to train up their own dependants in the ſame maxims, and ſo prove not only a balance to the profaneneſs and infidelity of the preſent age, but alſo a ſure proviſion for a ſpirit of religion and piety to ſucceeding generations. This accordingly was the foundation of that high encomium, which God himſelf gave of Abraham, and of the teſtimony, that he bare to his economy. " Shall I hide from Abraham the thing which I do, for " I know him, that he will command his children and his houſhold " after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord to do juſtice " and judgment?

Time thus diſcreetly portioned out, between the regards of domeſtic concerns and devotion, relieved by proper intervals of uſeful inſtruction and innocent amuſement, far from hanging heavy upon the hands, of either maſters or ſervants, of either parents or children, would paſs not with innocence only, but with improvement, which others wantonly ſacrifice to thoughtleſs mirth, or intemperance and debauch.

Above all, if amidſt all our gaiety and feaſting, in the midſt of all that ſoftneſs and pleaſure, which has already produced ſuch diſmal effects, upon the antient ſpirit and morals of theſe kingdoms, we begin to retrench a little of our ſuperfluity and luxury; to imitate rather the economy of our anceſtors, than the follies and extravagancies of our neighbours; to ſet before us, thoſe venerable patterns of frugality and houſewifry, which were the glory of the laſt age, and to which in fact, all the luxury of the preſent, is indebted for its ſupport; would we take, like them, into our account of economy, the regards of virtue and religion, and look upon it, what in truth it is, an open defiance to God, to let any one day paſs unhallowed, by either the devotion of the church or of the cloſet; our families might then be conſidered as the temples of the living God, and not the ſeats and nurſe-

ries

ries of lazineſs and corruptions; would they, who are the beſt bred perſons in the world, the moſt exact in point of decency and reſpect to an earthly prince, conſider themſelves but under the ſame obligations, to exactneſs in their attendance upon the worſhip of God, all that levity and inattention, that coldneſs and indifference to the offices of religion, which runs through all orders and ranks of mankind, might one day be remedied, and much of that godly diſcipline, of which our church ſo juſtly laments the loſs, be reſtored again.

Had theſe conſiderations but their proper weight, among thoſe of fortunes and diſtinction in the world; did they but look upon themſelves, as giving credit indifferently to either virtue or vice, by their countenance and authority; they would at leaſt, have ſo much compaſſion upon the happineſs of the public, as to preſerve the appearances of religion, and not forſake the aſſembling themſelves together in the houſe of God, as the manner is of ſome; they would not grudge their maker, the ſmall tribute of one days devotion to his ſervice, after a whole week ſpent, in a thoughtleſs irreligious round of pleaſures; they would of courſe eſteem it, as much beneath all character, to profane the Lord's day, in a courſe of idle and ungodly play, as it is offenſive to all decency and good manners; for this indeed, we are indebted, as for moſt other evil faſhions, to a neighbouring kingdom, intent upon the ruin of our morals, the more effectually to inſlave our liberties; if no other conſideration will awaken us, this one ſurely ſhould.

But to our prayers to God, in the great congregation, we muſt add, that which muſt give them all their efficacy, a moſt hearty concern for our private ſins, and a firm reſolution of forſaking them; if amidſt all our warlike exploits, we get not the better of thoſe foes in our own houſhold, our luſts and paſſions, no other victory will be of much conſequence to us, " for there is no peace, ſaith our God," " public or private, laſting or glorious, to the wicked. Let the wicked " man then forſake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, " and let him turn unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him, " and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

FINIS.

A

SERMON

Preached before the

UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE,

ON

WHIT-SUNDAY, 1748.

Being the Anniverſary of

The Reſtoration of King CHARLES II.

ADVERTISEMENT.

PAGE 30th, there is an epigram of Antipater's, quoted from Barnes's notes upon Homer, where it is both imperfect, and wrong tranſcribed. Mr. Smart, to whom I am obliged for that and ſome other tranſlations, has ſince communicated to me the epigram entire; and it is to be ſeen, in the 2d volume of the *Memoires de l'Academie des Inſcriptions*, &c. taken from a copy of the *Anthologia Inedita* of Salmaſius; and is tranſlated there into latin, by Monſieur Boivin.

Ἰσχέ[ε χειρα μυλαιον, αλετριδες· ἐυδέ[ε μακρα
Κ̣ην ὄρθρον ϖρολεγει γ̣ηρυς ακεκ[ρυονων·
Δηω γαρ̣ νυμφαισι χερων ἐπετειλα[ο μοχθος,
Αἱ δε κατ᾽ ἀκρο[ατην ἀλλομεναι τροχιην
Ἄξονα δινευσιν· ὁ δ᾽ ακτινεσσιν ἑλικ[αις
Στρωφ̣ᾷ ϖισσυρων κοιλα βαρη̣ μυλακων.
Γενομεθ᾽ ἀρχαιυ βιοτυ ϖαλιν, εἰ διχα μοχθων
Δαινυσθαι Δη̣ης ἔργα διδασχομεθα.

Stertite jam, famulæ, ceſſet mola, brachia ceſſent,
Stertite, dum gallus provocat ore diem.
Alma Ceres liquidas operi ſuccedere veſtro
Naiadas, et manuuṃ juſſit obire vicem.
Scandit nympha rotam celeri pede: vertitur axis,
Verſatur celeri turbine rapta mola.
Rurſum ævi veteris fruimur bona, dat ſua nobis
Munera non ullo parta labore Ceres.

BOVINIUS.

JOB. xlii. 10.

And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends.

THE reſtoration of Job, from the loweſt ebb of fortune, to more than all his former ſplendor and poſſeſſions, is an event ſo very extraordinary, as it ſtands recorded in the book, that bears his name, that men of learning and refinement, have had recourſe to a great variety of expedients, either to get rid of the fact its-ſelf, or to account for the juſtice and propriety of it.

To make good their reſpective points, ſome have been ingenious enough to explain away the text its-ſelf, admitting the genuinneſs of it, whilſt others have taken the ſhorter cut, and rejected both the opening and the concluſion of the book, as fabulous and ſpurious.

How that matter ſtands, will make no part of our preſent enquiry; it is ſufficient, that the whole of this book, as we now have it, has been handed down to us in the canon of ſcripture; only thus much I will venture to affirm, that however different the introduction and concluſion may be, from the middle part, in point of ſtile, yet in point of connexion and propriety, there is no difference at all, and that if neither the ſufferings of Job had been recited, in the ſetting out, nor his reſtoration, in the cloſe of it, it had been, not the dark difficult book, it has been accounted in all ages, but utterly abſurd and unintelligible.

Who this illuſtrious perſon was, is a difficulty of much the ſame kind, in the reſolution of which, it is not my deſign to engage your attention at this time, nor would I be underſtood to inſtitute a formal compariſon, between the hero of this performance, and the prince, whoſe reſtoration we are now aſſembled to commemorate; it is ſufficient, if in general, they bear ſome reſemblance to each other, if from the ſtory now before us, we can trace the principal ſteps, by which

di-

divine providence proceeds, in the revolutions of ſtates and kingdoms; what are the diſpoſitions of affairs, which to divine wiſdom, ſeem the beſt ſuited and adapted, for accompliſhing the reſtoration of a prince; and what are the peculiar bleſſings, we may reaſonably promiſe ourſelves, from events ſo very extraordinary and providential.

For that Job was a perſon of regal rank and dignity, has been an opinion, that has long prevailed in the world, and not without very good reaſon; the loſs of his crown and diadem, is what he more than once bewails; and in that part of the world, which was afterwards the ſeat of univerſal empire, and where princes were the greateſt and the moſt reverenced, we are told, he was the greateſt of them all.

There is a deſcription of him in the 29th chapter, which will ſet this matter in its true light, where, the majeſty of ſome eaſtern monarch, a Cyrus or an Alexander, revered as they were by their ſubjects, and adored, like deities, by their vaſſals, could not well be drawn in higher colors; yet, where to fix the dominions of this great prince, what were the manners, cuſtoms, religion, laws, or policy of his people, are points in which antiquity is ſilent, and which will require other principles, beſides antient hiſtory, to come at a ſatisfactory account of them.

It is enough for our preſent purpoſe, to know, that he was the greateſt of all the men of the eaſt, and that there was a time too, when he was the beſt; this there can be no doubt of, from the teſtimony born to him, "that he was a good man and perfect, one that "feared God and eſchewed evil;" and upon a nearer view of his ſtory, there appears ſuch an anxious concern on the part of providence, to protect and preſerve him, ſuch a confidence, that he would one day, emerge ſuperior to all his afflictions, ſuch an uncommon triumph in him, and ſo ſingular a diſtinction paid him, both in his proſperity and adverſity, that ſome public character it muſt be, ſome extraordinary perſon, or the repreſentative at leaſt of ſome extraordinary people, that is here exhibited.

Be that as it may, one would have thought a prince thus entrenched in virtue, and with all that affluence of fortune, which ſeems to promiſe

miſe a man ſecurity, might well flatter himſelf, as he did, that he ſhould die in his neſt, and multiply his days as the ſand; but how inſecure and tranſitory is every earthly enjoyment! in one day ſtript he was of all his fortunes, and bereaved too of all his children; his oxen and aſſes, his ſheep and his camels, the only riches of thoſe early days, were ſwept away by a band of Sabeans and Chaldeans; the very houſe, where his ſons and his daughters were feaſting, was blown down by a tempeſt, and they buried in the ruins. What became of himſelf we are not told, but moſt aſſuredly, he was carried away captive by the ſame band, which ſwept off his cattle, and lived an exile many years, in a ſtrange land.

What again it was, that brought down upon him ſo dreadful a calamity, is not indeed expreſsly mentioned; but the very firſt queſtion aſked him, at the interview with his three friends, " Remember, I " pray thee, whoever periſhed that was innocent," ſufficiently inſinuates the ſource of all his calamities. Virtues no doubt he had, and great ones too; tradition has handed down his name to us, as a miracle of patience, and it muſt be owned, that the conſtancy, with which he bore his calamities, ſhould ſeem to intitle him to all the merit of a martyr, provided only we could be ſure of his ſincerity; which amidſt the chicane and addreſs, that runs throughout his whole debate with the three friends, is queſtionable; the few memoirs left of him, beſpeak him a tender parent and a kind maſter, religiouſly obſervant of God's worſhip, and anxiouſly ſolicitous to recommend it to others: with all the piety of a good father, calling upon his children to ſacrifice, and with all the authority of a good huſband, reproving his wife's profaneneſs.

And happy had it been for him, if the very council, he had virtue enough to decline, in the firſt inſtance, he had had fortitude enough, to withſtand to the end; it has been conjectured, that ſhe was of a religion and intereſt, different from thoſe of his own country, an unhappineſs not peculiar to this prince; and perhaps to the influence, ſhe had over him, it was owing, that he was afterwards prevailed upon, to ſwerve from the true intereſts of his religion, and to indulge that vein of impiety, which he afterwards broke into.

How-

However that fact ſtand, certain it is, that with all his private good qualities, he had a mixture of ſome very ill ones, of a more public concern; the luſt of power was a paſſion, deeply rooted in him, and to this was owing all that pride and inſolence, all that oppreſſion and violence, which the three friends charge him ſo roundly with, and of which he acquits himſelf, with ſo very ill a grace. There is a portrait of him at full length, and that too of his own drawing, in which the features of majeſty are charged to the full, and his own ſentiments of it, even in the midſt of all his humiliation, expreſſed; "Oh that I "were as in months paſt, as in the days when God preſerved me; "when I went out to the gate through the city, when I prepared "my way in the ſtreets, the young men ſaw me and hid themſelves "from me, and the aged aroſe and ſtood up: the princes refrained "ſpeaking, and laid their hands on their mouth; unto me men gave "ear, and waited, and kept ſilence at my council; after my words "they ſpake not again, and my ſpeech dropped upon them; and they "waited for me as for the rain, and they opened their mouths for "me, as for the latter rain; if I laughed on them (ſuch was their opi-"nion of my gravity) they believed it not, and the light of my coun-"tenance they caſt not down; I choſe out their way and ſate chief, "I ſate as a king in the army."

From a ſtate, exalted like this, great indeed was the fall to wretchedneſs and downright deſpair; to ſurvive a ſtroke ſo ſhocking, and emerge again, from ruin ſo manifeſt, was as little deſirable in the circumſtances of body, he found himſelf in, as probable in the nature of the thing its-ſelf; he treats it therefore accordingly, and abandons himſelf to all the deſpondency, which the moſt abject mind could fall into.

Yet at this very inſtant, had providence decreed his reſtoration; for in the permiſſion given by God to Satan, there was an expreſs reſerve of his life; that was not to be put to hazard, how free ſoever he made with his fortunes and perſon.—A leſſon this; that the lives of princes, are things too ſacred, in the eyes of God, to be ſacrificed without his warrant and commiſſion; that if majeſty has its faults, there is ſomewhere a point where reſiſtance has its bounds; the reſentments of an injured people, will naturally break out into murmurings and com-

complaints, and theſe, if not timely attended to, into meaſures ſtill more diſagreeable and violent, though right and reaſonable: the reſt muſt be left of courſe to providence, which will make uſe of theſe reſentments, to humble the pride, or to depoſe the perſons of princes, and upon the whole, perhaps means more adequate to the end, could hardly be concerted.

To reſtore indeed a prince, under ſuch circumſtances, could not well be in the ſcheme of providence, without firſt reducing him to terms of ſubmiſſion and humiliation, and whatever light we conſider the book of Job in, the doctrine all along is aſſuredly this one, that the conditions of his being reſtored again, were his ſubmiſſion and repentance; the patience indeed of Job, as a learned prelate has well obſerved, is a thing much talked of, and we ſeldom look further for any uſe of this book; but ſure I am, that one doctrine there is, of different importance and concern, that we are to infer from his ſtory; one that reaches up to the rulers of the kingdoms of this world, from the loweſt individual. A leſſon it contains, for the moſt unfortunate princes, and that big with the greateſt conſolation, and it is this, "if kings be "bound in fetters, and holden with cords of afflictions, then it is, God "ſheweth them their works and their tranſgreſſions, that they have "exceeded; he openeth their ear alſo to diſciplin, and commandeth "that they return from iniquity; if they obey and ſerve him, they "ſhall ſpend their days in proſperity, and their years in pleaſure."

It has been thought by ſome writers upon this book, that one of the later kings of Judah, is glanced at in this remark; but the doctrinal part is all I have produced it for, that it muſt be through tedious diſcipline, and a ſeries of diſagreeable reproof and contradiction, that a prince thus fallen, muſt paſs, before he can promiſe himſelf to be reſtored; that without all the viciſſitudes of hope and fear, without ſome very violent convulſion, or perhaps the ſhaking of the very foundations of kingdoms, ſuch revolutions are not ordinarily, to be expected to take place.

Fallen therefore as this great perſon was, we may obſerve, his fall was the leaſt part of his misfortune; in order to reduce him to a thô-

rough ſenſe of his paſt errors, and ſober ſentiments of himſelf, the diſciplin ordained by providence, was ſevere indeed, but calculated, as all the ſchemes of providence are, to work its end with certainty, though with ſeverity. Famed as he was, over all the eaſt, for his ſingular piety, and renowned for his greatneſs, a more mortifying circumſtance could not have preſented its-ſelf, than the officious viſit paid him, at this criſis, by the three perſons, who had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him. Who they were, he ſoon perceived, as well as the errand they came upon, „ I know, ſays „ he, your thoughts, and the devices which ye wrongfully imagine a- „ gainſt me, for ye ſay, Where is now the houſe of the prince, and „ where are the dwellings of the wicked? At the very firſt ſight „ of them therefore he took the alarm, and curſt the day of his birth, „ for the thing, ſaid he, which I greatly feared is now come upon me."

And in truth, he had no ſmall reaſon to be afraid of them, they were perſons whom, in the full gale of all his proſperity, he had treated with contempt and inſolence, whom he owns, „ he would have „ diſdained to have ſet down with the dogs of his flock, children of baſe „ men, viler than the earth." They were the fanaticks of thoſe days; a ſett of men, who aſſerted ſuperior pretenſions to purity and piety, and were fighting the cauſe of God and religion; levellers in ſtate, and enthuſiaſts in religious principles; conſiſtently with this idea of them, at the firſt ſetting out, they opened their commiſſion with a modeſt claim to divine inſpiration, and a viſion from God, and under that pretence, repoached him without mercy, with all the errors and miſconduct of his paſt life, reſolving at the ſame time all his ſufferings, into ſome ſins or other of his, which were not the leſs certain for being ſecret.

And indeed, had the ſincerity of their reproof been equal to the juſtice of it, or their real ſentiments of religion, the ſame with their profeſſions, I ſee no reaſon for all that diſregard and neglect, which is ſhewn to their argument; they are plainly all the way, advocates for God, and deliver nothing, but what is entirely becoming that character; but the ſentence paſſed upon them, as well as the treatment they

they met with from Job, who ſcrupled not to call them hypocrites, forgers of lies, and phyſicians of no value, is a proof of their inſincerity, and accounts for their condemnation.

The truth was, the government, they abhorred, was now demoliſhed; the prince, they hated, brought to ſhame; and the church deſtroyed, that they envied; they had now an opportunity of taking ample revenge, for all the paſt indignities, that had been offered them; and providing againſt the future growth of any power, that might repeat them: and ſo indeed they did; they ſhewed him as little mercy, when they had once humbled him, as he had done them humanity, when he little dreamt of humiliation: to level foundations was their buſineſs, and a fairer ſeaſon never offered, than when his houſe was blown down; then they began to think of erecting a ſpiritual tyranny, upon the ruins of a civil one.

But this was not the ſcheme of providence; the chaſtiſement of a haughty prince, was a meaſure, and ſo they found it, very conſiſtent with its views of one day reſtoring him; the diſciplin he had undergone, during a tedious debate with his old adverſaries, had produced ſome conceſſions on his ſide, which it was a reproach to them, that they did not ſit down with, and that theſe had rather inhanced their triumph, than ſoftned their reſentments. Upon this, Elihu enters, and in a ſpeech happily tempered between mildneſs and ſeverity, takes both the parties to taſk, and ſhews, wherein both had been wrong; they, that had not been convincing, but perſecuting Job; he, that in the pride of his heart, had been arrogating to himſelf, ſo much righteouſneſs.

Thus prepared and ſoftened by Elihu, he is at laſt accoſted by God himſelf, who gives the finiſhing ſtroke to his conviction, ſhews him the folly and preſumption of all thoſe vain pretenſions, he had been making to ſuperior perfection, and of thoſe extravagant claims he had ſet up, of lording it over the conſciences of mankind. He then directs him, to entertain a more humble opinion of himſelf, and a more candid one of others, bids him join in ſacrifice, with thoſe very people, whom he eſteemed it a ſin of the firſt magnitude, to have communion with;

with; Job, in the ſequel, repents and abhors himſelf in duſt and aſhes; prays for his three friends; and then the Lord turned his captivity.

I have induſtriouſly avoided the ſuggeſting of any allegory, under this character, though men of great ſagacity and learning, have ſuſpected it; whatever my ſentiments are of that matter, I have choſe only to lay before you, what appears upon the face of Job's ſtory, and conſidered him all along, as a real character, and as one, who had experienced all the viciſſitudes of fortune. The moral however is much the ſame, upon the allegorical as the literal plan, and whether the people of God ſuffered a four hundred years bondage, as they did in Egypt, or a ſeventy years captivity, as they did at Babylon, the two events ſuppoſed by ſome, to be alluded to it is but a greater or a leſs term aſſigned for their diſciplin and humiliation, and which was to prepare them for that deliverance, which God had decreed for them, at the expiration of it.

But when all is done, if nothing but the bare deliverance of this prince was in view, it muſt be owned, it would hardly ſeem to juſtify all that embarraſs and perplexity, which it occaſioned, or indeed all that anxiety on the part of providence, to accompliſh it; ſome farther bleſſing there muſt be, of greater extent and greater duration too, to make it thus peculiarly the care of heaven; and ſo there was, it was a bleſſing that was to be entailed upon future generations, for after this, we are told, "Job lived one hundred and forty years, and ſaw his ſons, "and his ſons ſons, even four generations."

The ſame may be ſaid too of both thoſe famous deliverances of God's people; if neither the bondage Egypt, was to have been ſucceeded by the eſtabliſhment of a kingdom in Iſrael, nor the captivity at Babylon, by the reſettlement of that kingdom, nor both, crowned by the kingdom of the Meſſiah, it would be a problem not eaſily reſolved, why providence took ſuch tender and peculiar care of that people.

The moral I ſay, is much the ſame, in whatever light we view this ſtory of Job; for the grand moral of the whole is, that God is pleaſed

pleaſed ſometimes to interpoſe, in the behalf of princes or people, and delights to manifeſt his power and providence, in retrieving them from ruin, when they are as incapable of recovery, from all human means, and to all human appearance, as a body diſtempered and emaciated, like Job's.

For communities, as well as individuals, have their political life and death, their chronical and critical diſorders; national impiety and corruption, are as much the diſtemper of a nation, and are as certain indications of its tendency to diſſolution, as feveriſh and conſumptive habits are, in the conſtitutions of private perſons; this language indeed is more intelligible, when we come to compare it with that of the prophets, when they ſpeak of the corrupt ſtate of God's people. "The "whole head is ſick and the whole heart faint: from the ſole of the "foot even unto the head, there is no ſoundneſs, but wounds and "bruiſes, and putrifying ſores: they have not been bound up, neither "mollified with ointment."

Whatever correſpondence there may be, between ſuch an idea of the jewiſh ſtate, and the ſtate of Job's body, as deſcribed, both with reſpect to its diſtemper and its recovery, one obſervation there is no avoiding upon it, with regard to the ſtate of our own conſtitution in particular, at the period, which we are now aſſembled to commemorate; and that is its exact reſemblance to it, when the moſt excellent frame of our civil policy, had been utterly diſſolved, and a popular tyranny, had uſurped the place of a limited monarchy; when the ſtate, the envy and admiration of the proteſtant world, was rent in pieces from its very foundations; and our church, the ſtrength and beauty of the reformation, was ſtript of its revenues; deprived of its beſt paſtors; and proſtituted both in its doctrine, and diſcipline.

Then it was, that we were "ſmitten with ſore boiles from the "foot to the crown, and ſate down like Job, in the aſhes," a wretched ſpectacle. Within, all was corruption and impiety; without, all was enthuſiaſm, and hypocriſy; our land was polluted with the blood of thouſands, ſacrificed in an unnatural war, between a king ill-counſelled, to ſay no more of him, and a people too ill-treated, for ſo much muſt be

be ſaid of them, not to exert themſelves, for the recovery of their violated laws and liberties.

At ſuch a criſis in our conſtitution, it was high time to be alarmed, for " the whole head was ſick, and the whole heart faint," nor to all human appearance, was our remedy likely to be leſs deſperate, than our diſeaſe; under ſuch a complication of injuries and diſorders, public and private, did we labor, as had baniſhed not only great numbers of the beſt ſubjects, from their antient ſeats and country, but even the lawful ſucceſſor to the throne, himſelf, with the whole royal family, into a foreign country, and thrown him into the arms of a foreign power; a ſituation, extremely unhappy in all both its cauſes and conſequences.

To turn again a captivity ſuch as this, to bring back again to the throne of their anceſtors, a prince and family, after ſo utter an overthrow of their antient houſe, and the ruin of their whole royal prerogative, was an atchievement, out of the reach of all civil prudence and policy, unleſs acting only as ſecondary cauſes, under the great diſpoſer of all events, and the ſovereign ruler of ſtates and kingdoms; an houſe thus overſet, bid fair no more to make its appearance, no more than Job's did, and if it ever were rebuilt, it muſt be as Job's was, under the direction and good providence of God; and upon the ſame terms too of ſubmiſſion and repentance.

Upon ſuch terms, and under ſuch a gracious direction of providence, did the Almighty at length, take our cauſe into his own hands; bound up our wounds; mollified them with ointment; and by a turn as unexpected as welcome, brought back our captivity; reſtored to us our counſellors as at the firſt, and our judges as at the beginning, repaired the ſhattered fabrick of our conſtitution, and ſet the ſanctuary of God, upon its antient foundation; from this auſpicious day, we may fairly date, not only the reſtoration of a prince, though that were a goodly bleſſing, but the reſtoration of our own liberties, one of the greateſt bleſſings on this ſide heaven, and thoſe too, once more placed on their proper baſis, and balanced as they ought to be, with the crown's prerogative.

To

To bring this conſideration, ſtill more home to ourſelves, and to apply it to this ſubject of the day's feſtivity. It is not, I repeat it, ſo much the prince reſtored, nor yet the means of his reſtoration, as the ends of it, and the intereſt we ourſelves have in the event, that is the ground of our joy, upon this occaſion. Thoſe who lived in the days of diſtraction, when the ſea and the waves were roaring, and mens hearts failing them, and weathered out the ſtorm at laſt, felt of courſe an extaſy of joy, and hardly diſtinguiſhed between the event, and the glorious cauſe, that was to be ſerved by it; theirs was the tumultuous joy of tranſport, ours is the calm one of reflection and experience: amid the heat and hurry of their rejoicing, they went well nigh to rivet the very chains, they had ſhook off, and the very liberties, they had been contending for, at the expence of ſo much blood and treaſure, they were going to ſacrifice to flattery and compliment.

What the beſt of them could but hope for, and two of the beſt of them, took care to provide for, we live to feel and to enjoy; the ſecurity of both our religious and civil liberties; upon what foundations theſe were to ſtand, they were wiſe enough to know, and to do them juſtice, honeſt enough to ſecure, and thoſe were the antient bulwarks of the engliſh conſtitution, monarchy in the ſtate, and epiſcopacy in the church; but that providence, in order to perpetuate the bleſſing, ſhould have ſo ordered it, that the preſent ſucceſſion, ſo diſtant in its views though ſo direct in its pretenſions, and ſo exactly calculated to check the ſpirit ſoon revived, of arbitrary government, ſhould take place, and that too at ſo delicate a conjuncture, was a reſerve in the ſtores of heaven, for us and for our poſterity.

Not but the means, by which, all this was happily accompliſhed, will ever be a very proper ſubject of our praiſe and thankſgiving, as they are, in fact, matter of wonder and aſtoniſhment. It might juſtly ſeem a paradox, that the two extremes of anarchy and deſpotic power, ſhould ever meet in one and the ſame point, and conſpire to ſettle the wiſeſt and beſt model of government in the world, after all the ſhocks and convulſions it had paſſed through; but extremes are not ſo utterly irreconcileable, as we are apt to conceive of them, they are too hot to hold long, and too violent, not to waſte their vigor.

Worn

Worn out with long oppreſſion, and weary of the changes daily introduced, and hourly projecting, expecting ſtill new maſters, and new maxims, the ſubject laid in a moſt deſponding wretched ſtate, and by long and woful experience, found there were no reſources left him, but in the antient forms of government; in conſequence of this conviction, monarchy and epiſcopacy, attended by liberty and property once more took poſſeſſion of theſe kingdoms, and "an exiled king, "abandoned by his ſubjects and friends; rejected by every ſtate and "power in Europe; and deſerted in a manner, by his own council; "was, within a moment after, told by the mouth of the whole com-"mons of England; that if the riches of the nation, could make him "great, if the affections of his people could make him happy, he was "the greateſt and happieſt monarch in the world."

May the ſame bleſſed ſpirit which pronounced the words, "let there "be light and there was light;" which brought order at laſt, out of all this confuſion; which on this day, manifeſted its-ſelf, to men of every nation under heaven; and on this occaſion, ſo remarkably diſtinguiſhed our own; continue to bleſs both our church and ſtate, with its influence, and our governors with its direction; may the experience of former mercies, excite our gratitude, and of former errors, our conviction. What a ſpirit of pride, and what a ſpirit of meekneſs, falſly ſo called, could do, we have had ample proof, we have gone by turns all the ſtages of popery and preſbytery, of enthuſiaſm and fanaticiſm, and have ſeen how far, both the ſpirit of liberty, and the ſpirit of oppreſſion could carry us; luckily for us, we have at laſt, after gratifying the utmoſt of our curioſity, returned to the point we ſet out from.

And here let us hold, and ſit down happy in the enjoyment of our liberties and of our conſciences; theſe are the fruits of the ſpirit, which communities enjoy, in common with individuals; calculated to make the world, a ſcene of happineſs here, and the inhabitants of it, happy to all eternity. Theſe the Apoſtles tells us, are love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodneſs, faith, meekneſs and temperance. Againſt which there is no law.

FINIS.

A

SERMON

Preached before the

UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE,

On WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1747-8.

The Day appointed by Proclamation for a public Faſt.

2 CHRON. XXIX. 20, 21.

Then Hezekiah the king roſe early, and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the houſe of the Lord: And they brought ſeven bullocks, and ſeven rams, and ſeven lambs, and ſeven he-goats for a ſin-offering for the kingdom, and for the ſanctuary, and for Judah, and he commanded the prieſts, the ſons of Aaron, to offer them on the altar of God.

ONE of the diſtinguiſhing characters of holy ſcripture, enumerated by St. Paul, is that it is profitable for inſtruction in righteouſneſs; inſtruction, not barely from the moral precepts delivered in it, for that he had before ſet down, under its being profitable for doctrine, but from the excellent characters, the extraordinary incidents, the illuſtrious examples of virtue and piety, recorded in thoſe venerable monuments of antiquity.

Theſe ſtamp an additional value upon ancient ſcripture, and ſerve to convey, what in the doctrinal part, were perhaps tedious and unpalatable, in a manner more likely to ſucceed with the world, than a formal recital of truths unwelcome, though neceſſary and eternal.

To ſhew in fact, that duties of the greateſt apparent difficulty have yet been performed, that exploits of the moſt arduous nature have been atchieved, upon principles of religion; to produce the authority of perſons once living, who, through faith, ſubdued kingdoms, wrought wonders, ſtopped the mouths of lions, and quenched the violence of fire, is in truth, to do honor to that

 faith,

faith, and to excite not the vain curioſity, but the generous emulation of ſucceeding ages; it is to recommend their virtue as uſeful to the world, and at the ſame time, practicable by individuals.

The compliment paid by Tully, to the authority of the Catos, Scipio and Lælius, " that it was ſo great, that it might even cover the ſuſpicion of a fault," may perhaps be too far carried; but it is grounded upon the ſame maxims, and proceeds upon much the ſame ſort of reaſonings, as all thoſe high encomiums given by the inſpired writer, to Gideon and Barak, to Sampſon and Jephthah, to David and Samuel, of whom though the world was not worthy, yet from their example it might have greatly profited.

Upon the compariſon indeed, there is this advantage on the ſide of ſcripture-hiſtory above profane, that here the reader ſees only the natural cauſes and conſequences of things, the prudence or the paſſions of men operating in their ordinary courſe; there he ſees all this and ſomething more, the wiſdom of God, and every other attribute, diſplayed in the conducting of every event to the ends of divine providence; he ſurveys the lives of princes, the fate of empires, the conduct of both public and private characters, in a light very different from that, in which they preſent themſelves to a common obſerver.

In the Jewiſh ſtory this is ſtill more evident; the reader is not there left to infer the wiſdom of God, by either conjecture or concluſion from each particular incident, but the wiſdom of God's government is the very ſubject of their whole hiſtory, the argument its-ſelf and not the inference; the lives of their reſpective judges, princes and law-givers, are but ſo many accounts of the conduct of God's miniſters, and the reign of each king preſents the hiſtory of divine providence, under that king's particular adminiſtration.

Happy

Happy were it for us, if the ſame impartiality, which ſhews its-ſelf in every page of the ſacred hiſtorian, could be pronounced of our own annaliſts, if ſuch a ſhameful ſacrifice were not continually making to party and prejudice, and they would once learn neither to aggravate the virtues nor the vices of our princes; they might then be read with the ſame attention, though not held in the ſame reverence with thoſe, who have recorded the wiſdom of Solomon, and his infatuation too, the adultery as well as the piety of David, and all the vanity with all the zeal of Hezekiah.

Upon a very extraordinary occurrence in this prince's ſtory it is, that I would beg leave to employ your meditations on the ſolemnity of this day, when we, like the congregation of Iſrael, are called upon by public authority, to aſſemble ourſelves in the houſe of God, and to offer up the ſacrifice of prayer for the ſins of this nation.

If we take a view of the kingdom of Judah, at the time that Hezekiah came to the throne of it, it will indeed be no very entertaining one, but yet it will afford abundant matter of uſeful reflection to us, when we turn our thoughts, as the buſineſs of this day requires, upon the moral ſtate of kingdoms and empires, and conſider them, as bearing a religious as well as a civil character; for how precarious ſoever all our reaſonings are, upon the ſtate of civil prudence or policy, by reaſon of our great diſtance from the ſprings of public action, yet the viſible ſtate of virtue and piety is a thing we cannot well miſtake; for public virtue is but the collective virtue of individuals, and even public liberty has no ſure foundation but in private virtue.

To form our judgment of that, we need but look abroad, and ſee upon what principles the generality of men act in the common affairs of life: whether there be in fact, that public regard to good conſcience and honeſty, kept up in all our intercourſe with one another; that ſcrupulous regard to truth and fidelity; that

that ſtrict chaſtity and purity in private life; and of courſe, that exemplary gravity and ſerioufneſs in public; whether there be that reverence for things of a ſacred and religious nature; that devotion and piety, preſerved in all orders and degrees of men; which denominate a pious as well as a prudent people; at leaſt we cannot well miſtake, when things are come to a flagrant pitch, on one ſide or other of the queſtion, we may then ſafely enough pronounce upon the virtue of a kingdom or the wickedneſs of it, from the virtue or wickedneſs of them that dwell therein.

This it is plain, was the reaſoning all along, upon the ſtate of God's own people; the eſtimate of their religion, and indeed of their policy too, for there was no ſeparating them, was ever taken from the ſtate of private virtue; it is but ſeldom indeed that we hear that their piety was predominant, but of the prevalence of their iniquity, both their prophets and hiſtorians bear witneſs. At the time, we are now ſpeaking of, it is amazing to obſerve, that a kingdom conſtituted, as that kingdom was, upon ſuch wiſe maxims, and fenced too by ſuch a ſtrong barrier, as that of a ſpecial providence, againſt all incroachments both of the arms and the manners of its neighbours, ſhould be ſo totally overrun with all kinds, and with every degree too of wickedneſs.

When Hezekiah mounted the throne, there reigned among their judges and magiſtrates, injuſtice and oppreſſion, and all manner of debauchery; among their prieſts, pride and avarice; among the people of courſe, corruption and ignorance; the king his father and predeceſſor, was the perſon, to whom indeed they ſtood indebted for all this irreligion, he had outſtript the very worſt of all their princes in idolatry and impiety, burnt incenſe to every deity in groves and high places, and particularly in the valley of Hinnon, that ſcene of their iniquity; the very ſanctuary of God he had dared to defile with the groſſeſt pollutions, had caſt out the altar of God from the temple, and reared in its very place, an heathen one; not content with even a ſtep ſo bold as this, he took one more effectual to baniſh all their religion, and cauſed at laſt the temple its-ſelf

to

to be ſhut up, and raiſed altars in every corner of Jeruſalem, to the Syrian Gods; as he lived a monſter of impiety he died ſo too, but the diſtinction, that could not be made, in his life, was paid him at his death, for they buried him, not in the ſepulchre of the kings of Iſrael, an honor ſacred to their good princes only; but mixt his aſhes with the meaneſt of his ſubjects, in the city of Jeruſalem.

In this wretched condition was that kingdom found by Hezekiah, when nothing ſhort of the zeal of that good prince, ſeemed equal to the reforming a corruption ſo univerſal: ſtill acquieſcence under ſuch a wretched ſtate of things was cowardice, and deſpair was downright impiety; to retrieve if poſſible, the face of religion was one ſtep, and that too a very promiſing one, to the retrieving in due time the ſubſtance of it, the ſource of all this corruption was viſible enough, though it might coſt ſome time and trouble too, to come at the remedy for it. The ſhutting up the temple had been attended, as it naturally would be, with the diſcontinuance of all the ſervices of religion, with the neglect of purification in their prieſts, and with a general and abandoned remiſſneſs in the people, the daily worſhip of God was entirely laid aſide, and the daily ſacrifice, which was expreſsly inſtituted for a ſin-offering and for an atonement, not neglected only, but utterly forgotten.

Here therefore their good king determined to begin, where indeed all reformation ſhould begin, to bring them firſt back to a ſenſe of God, the more completely to bring them back once more to a ſenſe of themſelves; his firſt care, was to open the doors of the temple, and his next, to ſanctify it; he ſummons all the prieſts therefore and the Levites, to perform their reſpective ſervices upon this occaſion, and, the moment they had prepared the temple, he ſends a ſolemn meſſage to all the rulers of the city to attend him; " then Hezekiah the king roſe early, and gathered the " rulers of the city, and went unto the houſe of God, and they " brought ſeven bullocks, and ſeven rams, and ſeven lambs, and

" ſeven he-goats, for a ſin offering for the kingdom, and for
" the ſanctuary and for Judah, and he commanded the prieſts,
" the ſons of Aaron, to offer them on the altar of the Lord."

Two laws there were in the books of Moſes, requiring a ſacrifice for the ſins of the whole people, when they were fallen into error: by the firſt, a bullock is to be offered in ſacrifice, when the whole congregation had done ſomething contrary to their law, but yet had not at the ſame time forſaken their religion; by the ſecond, a goat is to be added to the bullock, when they acted contrary to their religion, and were fallen at the ſame time into the practice of external rites; the bullock was offered for a burnt-offering, in token that they owned no other God but the Lord, nor any other religion but that of Moſes; the goat for a ſin-offering, to expiate the guilt contracted by their having acted contrary to their religion. Both theſe their good king offered up, and upon this occaſion increaſed not only their number, but made a farther addition of other ſacrifices, conceiving, as it has been conjectured, that the extraordinarineſs of the occaſion would well juſtify the number, and that ſuch a complicated ſcene of guilt could not be expiated, but by increaſing both the quantity and quality of the ſacrifices.

See here a ſpectacle, which angels might ſurvey with reverence, and God himſelf look down upon with compaſſion; the whole congregation of Judah, with their rulers and their elders at the head of them, proſtrate before the mercy-ſeat of God; behold one of the greateſt monarchs upon earth, humbled for the ſins of his people; confeſſing his ſhame and confuſion of face; calling out for mercy, and imploring God's pardon for his rebellious ſinful ſubjects. If there be joy in heaven over one ſinner that repenteth, what an acceſſion of joy muſt it needs be to the whole heavenly hoſt, to ſee this whole family returned once more to duty, deprecating their offended father's vengeance, and aſking his forgiveneſs? At ſo bleſſed a ſight angels may well rejoice, for God himſelf hath pleaſure therein.

A reign thus opened, with ſo ſolemn an act of national humiliation, might fairly promiſe its-ſelf all the glory, with which it concluded; never was that people more happy, than in the reign of this excellent prince, for mixt with as few weakneſſes as any man, he had more virtues than moſt princes, and in zeal for the honor of God, he fell ſhort of none; he had but two enemies, and they formidable ones, the king of Aſſyria, and the idol of the high places, the one was debauching the morals, the other enſlaving the liberties of his kingdom; his ſubjects joined him to expel the one, and with their aſſiſtance he effected it; the angel of God appeared in his defence in the camp of Aſſyria, and overcame the other, ſo that "He returned with ſhame of face to "his own land."

The very particular circumſtances of that republick, that diſtinguiſh it eſſentially, from all other governments of the world, leave us not at liberty, to conclude upon the ſame miraculous interpoſitions of God, in our favor; nor in an age like this, can we hope to find ſuch an hearty and zealous concurrence of all men, in reforming the religion of this kingdom; yet ſtill there are left many thouſands in this our Iſrael that have not bowed the knee to Baal; and we are at liberty, from the connection there is between virtue and happineſs, and from the ordinary courſe of God's providence, to infer ſome degree at leaſt of bleſſedneſs, upon a people that ſet themſelves ſeriouſly, and in good earneſt to this great work: and the many viſible interpoſitions we of this nation have often experienced, of God's favor, contribute much to encourage ſo reaſonable an expectation. For though national viſitations make not now, a ſettled part of God's government of the world, though the proſperity of kingdoms keeps not now, ſo exact a pace with their obedience, yet the general reaſoning, "that righteouſneſs "exalteth a kingdom," holds as good in the preſent ſyſtem as before, and it is juſt as true of chriſtian kingdoms as it ever was of the jewiſh, "that iniquity muſt be their ruin."

If this be the caſe with them, it matters not greatly, what the diſtinction is, between the particular eſſence of their reſpective conſtitutions, for this but operates upon the motives only, and not I conceive, upon the principles of their obedience. Obedience to government, as the ordinance of God, is as much a moral duty among Chriſtians, as it was among the Jews, and ſcripture accordingly, has put the rendring to Cæſar the things that are Cæſar's, upon the ſame footing, as the rendering to God the things that are God's; all the relative duties of ſubjects and princes, are juſt the ſame, whether their obedience be rewarded in this or in another life; as communities indeed, it is not ordinarily in the ſcheme of providence, to reward them, but, as individuals, they ſhall be recompenſed, at the reſurrection of the juſt.

Not but the intereſts of true religion have their ſhare, and a great one too, in the conſtitution of chriſtian kingdoms; and if by the intereſts of religion, we mean the intereſts of virtue and piety, certain it is, that thoſe intereſts enter deeply, into the conſtitution of this kingdom in particular, and ſtand ſo cloſely connected with the civil ſtate, as to ſhare abundantly its good or bad fortunes; our public worſhip of God, and our ſyſtem of chriſtian faith, have the ſeal and ſanction of public authority, and no church antient or modern, has ever yet produced ſo perfect a compoſition of devotions, as our own.

Still, I ſuppoſe, though our eſtabliſhed faith may yet be, where our reformers left it, we pretend not to be without corruptions in practice, no more than the ſeven churches of Aſia, in St. John's days, who though they all profeſſed the ſame faith, and retained all the doctrines, neceſſary to the being of a church, ſtill had fallen into ſome grievous abuſes; doctrines of different kinds, and built upon different motives, had crept into them; ſome that tended to temporal intereſt and grandeur; ſome to wavering and unſteadineſs; others again, to immodeſty and impurity; and others to coldneſs and indifference; there never I ſuppoſe was, in any church, an age without what we may call, its complexional error; in our own.

own, what a variety of ſhapes has chriſtianity appeared in? a ſlave one day, to fanatic, the next, to ſuperſtitious principles, ſometimes, in all the fever of enthuſiaſm, ſunk again at others, in the very languor of indifference.

All that government can do, towards reforming each exceſs, is to aſſert ſteadily its own eſtabliſhed principle, and to exert its authority in the puniſhment of evil doers, and in the praiſe of them that do well; oppreſs the conſciences of men it cannot, for theſe are accountable to a higher tribunal; practice ſeverities, upon their perſons or liberties, it will not; unleſs their religious leads to ſeditious principles, and interferes with, what the chriſtian religion never meant to interfere, the particular policy of its government, or claſhes with its peace and ſafety. Still it cannot ſit an unconcerned ſpectator, where either the honor of that God whom it worſhips, or the faith of that Redeemer, which it profeſſes, is violated by the ſubject, for this returns upon government its-ſelf, ſets men looſe from all thoſe ties and obligations, which the ſtate had availed its-ſelf of from its alliance with religion, and at the ſame time, that deſpite is done to the ſpirit of grace, defiance is bid to the ſpirit of government; here therefore the chaſtiſement of its laws muſt take place, for wrath as well as for conſcience ſake, not ſo much in vengeance for private opinion, as for thoſe opinions having operated to downright rebellion.

Where things are not come to ſo deſperate a criſis, there are expedients, which government is in poſſeſſion of, ſufficient to reform all abuſes, and to ſtop in ſome degree the torrent of corruption; the miniſter of God, commiſſioned as he is, in ſome ſenſe, by God himſelf, ought in the adminiſtration of that high office, to have a conſtant eye to God's glory, and to the enlargement of his kingdom, and conſequently, is to provide laws wholſome and effectual, for the puniſhment of wickedneſs and vice, and for the maintenance of true religion and virtue; and to look to the execution of them. He may put, and he ought to put, every ſoul of man that doth evil, under all the difficulties and diſcouragements, con-

ſiſtent with chriſtian charity, ſuffer no perſon to approach the throne, much leſs to bear any ſhare in his councils or favor, whoſe moral character has made his political one obnoxious; by his own example, he may excite the virtue and inflame the piety, of all in authority under him, and theſe again, will have an amazing influence upon the lower ranks and orders, like the oil of old, that was poured on Aaron's beard, and ran down to the ſkirts of his cloathing.

To ſpeak the truth, Government has done its part, and aſſerted every fundamental of the reformed religion, with an uncommon ſteadineſs, and at the ſame time with an unprecedented moderation, we have no complaints, that I know of, for any breach upon the religious eſtabliſhment, or any innovation upon either the doctrine or the diſcipline of our church; it is not, that the doors of our temple are ſhut, but that, open as they daily are, they are unfrequented, not that the faith of our church, but that the morals of our people are debauched. Ill enough does a ſpirit of levity and wantonneſs promiſe, to our religion, but fatal to it, muſt be that diſſoluteneſs of manners, that ſtifles all ſhame, and bears down the fences of diſcipline; ſuch a ſpirit goeth not out, but by faſting and prayer.

And what can either the zeal, or the wiſdom of government, do more? they have aſſembled the rulers and the elders, and proclaimed, throughout the whole kingdom, a "general faſt and hu-
" miliation before almighty God, to be obſerved in a moſt devout
" and ſolemn manner, by ſending up our prayers and ſupplica-
" tions to the divine Majeſty, for obtaining pardon of our ſins,
" and for averting all thoſe heavy judgments, which our mani-
" fold provocations have moſt juſtly deſerved, and for imploring
" God's bleſſing and aſſiſtance on the arms of his majeſty, and
" for reſtoring peace, ſafety and proſperity to theſe kingdoms."
Here we ſee government reſolved again, as it were, into its primitive principles, and flying, for its preſervation, to the prayers of the people, to whom it ſtands indebted for its exiſtence; and

much no doubt, may be done by the cordial zeal, and hearty concurrence of all orders and degrees of men, in a work ſo eſſential to our ſafety, could we but once learn to lay the ſtreſs, where all the ſtreſs ſhould properly be laid, upon the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith; much may be done, for the revival of Chriſtianity, would we but cheriſh that one leading principle of it, chriſtian charity. We pray indeed in our public worſhip of God, that "all who profeſs and call themſelves Chriſtians, may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith, in unity of ſpirit and in the bond of peace;" ſtill upon every advance made toward union, there diſcover its-ſelf, a coldneſs and reſerve, but ill-ſuited to ſuch petitions. Would to God, that all the jealouſy on one ſide, and all the perverſeneſs on the other, were ſacrificed to that bleſſed virtue, which hopeth all things, believeth all things, and endureth all things; we were then a match for that man of ſin, that exalteth himſelf, above every thing that is worſhipped; but our misfortune is, we have not the zeal for true religion, that the church of Rome has for a falſe one, we are careleſs as well as diſconcerted in thoſe matters.

But it is in vain to expect from heaven, any bleſſings, as a people, whilſt as individuals, we are at open war, with every thing ſerious and ſacred, for there is no peace, ſaith our God, to the wicked; if amidſt all our victories, we get not ground upon our private vices, we have no occaſion to triumph at leaſt, if perchance our deſtruction fall not the heavier upon us for it. We are now engaged in a lawful war, and muſt refer the event to him, in whoſe hands are the iſſues of it, who pulleth down one power, and ſetteth up another, as he ſees moſt convenient; from the juſtice of our cauſe, the bravery of our troops, and the gallant conduct of our commanders, there is perhaps no ſucceſs, we might not promiſe our ſelves, did but our moral deſerts bear any proportion, to our political pretenſions: but the righteouſneſs of the beſt cauſe, may be overbalanced by the iniquity of them who eſpouſe it; and it is adding preſumption to folly, when we profeſs to humble the pride of our neighbours, at the ſame time we are not cloathed with humility

ourſelves;

ourſelves; no ornament ſits with ſo peculiar a grace upon Chriſtians, nor is any of ſo great price in the ſight of God, as that of a meek and quiet ſpirit.

I beſeech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice, holy, and acceptable to God: which is your reaſonable ſervice. The worſt enemies you have are thoſe of your own houſehold, your luſts and paſſions, which war againſt the ſoul; get but the better once of theſe, purify only thoſe temples of the living God, from all the corruption of ſenſual appetites, and his bleſſed ſpirit will come in, and make his abode with you. Mortify therefore your members, which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanneſs, inordinate affection, evil concupiſcence, and covetouſneſs, for which things ſake, the wrath of God cometh upon the children of diſobedience; theſe are they, which have turned the world upſide down, which have corrupted the pureſt church upon earth, and brought a ſcandal upon the moſt holy religion, that was ever preached.

It is yet in your power, may it be in your hearts alſo, to wipe off this foul reproach from our church and kingdom, by being yourſelves the pattern of induſtry, ſobriety, and of every virtue that adorns the chriſtian life. Let the time paſt be ſufficient, to have loſt in indolence and pleaſure, and the time to come, employ with the more diligence for the neglect; two of the greateſt of God's judgments upon a nation, are now upon us, the ſword upon man, and the peſtilence upon beaſt; when ſuch judgments are in the earth, ſurely the inhabitants of the world will then, if ever, learn righteouſneſs.

But without perſonal repentance, it is a jeſt to talk of national reformation, here is the ſeat of all our calamity, hither therefore muſt be addreſſed, all that pretends to reform it. A ſenſe of danger perhaps may do, what a ſenſe of religion thus far, has not been able to do; awaken us to true repentance and amendment of life, without which, infinite mercy, even the ſuffering and blood of

Chriſt, will avail us nothing, for there now remains no more ſacrifice for ſin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation; the ſacrifices of God are a broken and contrite ſpirit, an heart big with every ſentiment, and breaking forth in every expreſſion, of its guilt and unworthineſs, recollecting all its ſins, confeſſing all its corruption, and flying to the mercy-ſeat of God, for pardon; not a ſingle gloomy act of devotion, nor yet a ſplenetic deſponding hour of reflection, but the whole remainder of life devoted entirely, to mortification and ſelf denial, and dedicated wholly to God's ſervice.

An heart thus diſciplined, is ſecure of Chriſt for its mediator, and of God for its acceptance, the blood of Jeſus will ſprinkle it, and angels and juſtified ſpirits hallow its converſion; for there is more joy in heaven over one ſinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine juſt perſons that need no repentance.

A SER-

A

SERMON

Preached at his

Majesty's Chappel in WHITE-HALL,

On SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1744.

Ep. JAMES, Chap. V. verſe 11.

Behold we count them happy, which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job; and have ſeen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.

"TO the twelve tribes which are ſcattered abroad," it is that St. James addreſſes this epiſtle, and the firſt and laſt leſſon he gives them, is upon the ſubject of patience. "My brethren," for ſo opens his letter, "count it all joy, that ye fall into diverſe temptations, knowing this, that the trial of your faith worketh patience; but let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

As the proper grounds and baſis of this virtue, he recommends to them faith in God, ſuch a firm belief and confidence in providence, as ſtaggers not upon the approach of difficulties, nor yet wavers in the midſt of temptations, "for he that wavereth, is like a wave of the ſea, driven by the wind and toſſed; let not that man think that he ſhall receive any thing of the Lord;" a thought; if he dared to conceive ſuch an one, that at once denies in fact the exiſtence, the wiſdom, the juſtice and goodneſs of God, and either carries with it all that deſpair, which but ill conſiſts with any belief of a providence, or what comes to nearly the ſame thing, all that confidence, which preſumes to act and live independent of it.

The foundations of this virtue thus laid in faith, ſuch a faith, as inſpires a man with a rational conviction of the being of a God, and of the exiſtence of a future ſtate, "that God is, and that he is a rewarder of all ſuch as diligently ſeek him;" his next directions extend to duties, miniſterial and ſubſervient to

the great virtue he was teaching them; at the head of theſe, ſtands the important duty of the government of the tongue, that little but unruly member; a member, which for want of proper reſtraint, "ſetteth on fire the courſe of nature, and is its-ſelf ſet on fire of hell;" that by the querulouſneſs and murmurings of it, beſpeaks a heart diſſatisfied at leaſt, if not deſponding; rather ready to call in queſtion the diſpoſition of providence, upon any calamitous event, than to ſit down reſigned and patient under them.

He then proceeds to ſome other duties, or rather to ſome farther cautions againſt particular vices, which are apt to lie in the way of this divine virtue; covetouſneſs was a vice too plainly deſtructive of it, not to be eſpecially guarded againſt; intemperance, one that was the very reverſe of it; pride, another which would abſolutely annihilate it; againſt theſe therefore, he cautions them the more affectingly, in proportion as they were the very vices, which were not only the moſt pernicious in their own nature; but the moſt pernicious too in their conſequences, conſidering the ſituation of thoſe he was writing to.

Yet conſidering this, ſome farther proofs were ſtill requiſite, to evince to them the practicableneſs of the duty, whatever impreſſions they might conceive of its reaſonableneſs; and perhaps of all the virtues which adorn the human life, there was none which called for this particular kind of evidence, ſo much, as that which St. James is here inſiſting upon, the grand virtue of patience; human nature is not ordinarily ſatisfied with abſtract reaſonings upon ſuch a ſubject, nor yet with arguments drawn from duty or propriety; experience, in points ſo nearly concerning its peace, and ſo manifeſtly breaking in upon its happineſs, as pain and ſufferings, muſt be at leaſt, one of the arguments that we addreſs to it, and it will have ſome more ſenſible evidence of the uſe and advantage of them, and ſome inſtances too of the poſſibility of enduring them, before it will ordinarily ſubmit to bear them in a becoming manner.

This point therefore we find labored by our apoſtle, in the chapter before us, with equal argument and authority, and left

the

the former might fall ſhort of its force upon the impatient deſponding Jew, he gives it all the additional ſtrength, which example and experience could adminiſter to it. He quotes as he goes along the inſtances of the huſbandman, the prophets, and Job, to ſupport the argument he was maintaining, of patience, and concludes with the latter as coming up to the point, " Behold we count them happy, which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job; and have ſeen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.

From which words I ſhall firſt, examine into the different pretenſions, and fix the true merit, of the virtue of patience; and ſecondly conſider, how far the examples, quoted of Job, will juſtify the apoſtle's reaſoning, and recommend the practice of this virtue.

And here it is very remarkable, that our apoſtle has inſtanced in this chapter no leſs than three different degrees of this virtue, each riſing in beautiful proportion, above the other, and conſpiring together to form the higheſt and moſt perfect image that could be drawn of patience. Verſe the ſeventh, exhibits the firſt and loweſt degree of patience, perſeverance; " wait brethren, until the coming of the Lord," to this particular ſpecies of patience is applied that ſimilitude, of the huſbandman's waiting for the precious fruits of the earth, and expecting till he receives the former and the latter rain. The next degree of this virtue, we learn from verſe the tenth, long ſuffering, " take my brethren the prophets for an example of ſuffering affliction," or rather pain. *i. e.* Learn from the inſtance of theſe good men, that to ſuffer pain and natural evils, is as neceſſary and unavoidable in this world, as to meet with croſſes, delays, or diſappointments: and to ſhew that neither is this the whole of this virtue, that ſomething more than barely ſuffering, is required of us, verſe the eleventh we have the laſt and higheſt degree of patience, behold we count them happy, not that wait, nor that ſuffer, but that endure; that undergo affliction and pain, not with patience only; but with courage and confidence; and from this ſuccinct view of the ſeveral ſtages of

this virtue, it will be eaſy to trace its ſeveral perfections as practicable by mankind.

In the firſt inſtance, it is gentle and eaſy to be intreated; is not ſubject to the haſty flights of paſſion, nor the bitter expreſſions of reſentment and diſcontent; not expoſed to the anxious purſuits of avarice, nor open to the reſtleſs ſpirit of envy or ambition. It is in truth, the very reverſe of all this, it teaches us in whatever ſtate we are, therewith to be content; not to murmur or repine at God's providence, but wait his due time for the accompliſhment of all his meaſures; to give him credit for all the demands we have upon him, in point of ſupport and temporal convenience; and neither to envy nor covet, beyond what reaſonable ambition ſuggeſts, a ſituation, above what it has pleaſed him to place us in.

It teaches us the moſt reſpectful addreſs; to be meek and lowly, civil and courteous; equal to every diſappointment, and ſuperior to every affront; to poſſeſs our ſouls in peace; to keep a watch over our hearts; and guard the door of our lips; it informs us, in the courſe of our communication with the world, to treat every perſon with civility and good manners; our friends, with eaſe and good nature, our enemies with forbearance and reſpect; our good fortunes with decency, and our misfortunes with temper; our hopes with modeſty, and our fears without deſpair; to entertain the beſt opinion of the ſettled courſe and conſtitution of things, and to make the ſame concluſion in the moral world, with which God himſelf, upon a review of the whole creation, cloſed the natural one; behold it is very good.

Conſidered in the ſecond view, this virtue furniſhes us with an admirable leſſon of the condition of our natures, informs us that we are born to troubles, as the ſparks flie upwards; as certainly ſubject to pain and affliction, as that there are ſuch evils in the world; ſuggeſts from hence, a noble inference, that happineſs pure and unalloy'd, is not the condition of this life, though it be the ultimate reſult of a well-ſpent one; that in the courſe of God's government of the world, troubles and ſufferings make the great part of our probation here on earth; and are as neceſſary to

our

our virtue, as uninterrupted eaſe and enjoyment; that through much tribulation, we are to enter into the kingdom of heaven; that in the mean time however, it would be a forfeiture of common ſenſe in us, to ſink under the common attacks upon either our health or our proſperity, a childiſh want of temper, to grow peeviſh upon accidental, or moroſe upon habitual infirmities; that evenneſs and ſerenity of ſpirits, are the beſt cordial in afflictions; and though indeed we cannot always hope to preſerve them, in ſo exact a poize, yet the nearer we keep to it, the more fairly ſhall we bid for happineſs.

Under ſuch ſentiments, the lighter evils of life ſit with great eaſe, upon the patient man, and even the heavier, with a peculiar grace and dignity; pain and ſickneſs, though he be not inſenſible to, he is yet reſigned and chearful under; conſiders them as the neceſſary reſult, of a being inhabiting an earthly tabernacle, and upon the whole, as ſo many checks upon the wantonneſs of health and high ſpirits. Want and poverty he ſubmits to, as evils indeed, but yet, all things conſidered as neceſſary and uſeful ones, and ſo reconciles his appetites to the means he has of gratifying them. Should oppreſſion or perſecution be the hard lot of ſuch a man, the ſame happy temper carries him every trial, with equal fortitude; he reſents indeed with a proper thorough ſpirit, every indignity, but goes not beyond the bounds of a juſt reſentment; thirſts not after revenge, but checks the inſolence of his oppreſſors, with ſome ſuch modeſt reproof as that of the archangel, "the Lord rebuke thee!"

To have attained ſuch a degree of patience, is truly brave and laudable, but at the ſame time it muſt be owned, that the moſt exalted pitch of human ſufferings, have been reached in the pagan world, without the motives of a providence, that the maxims of Zeno and Epicurus, have produced to the world, moſt amazing inſtances of this ſort, and almoſt equalled the heathen, with the chriſtian calendar; and what primitive martyrs and later confeſſors underwent in atteſtation of the being and providence of God, *Vanini* the arch-atheiſt, is ſaid to have ſuffered in blaſphemous denial of both.

So that it is not perſeverance, nor reſignation, nor both together that conſtitute this virtue: natural phlegm and indolence is apt to have too great a ſhare in the one, and vanity in the other, and not unfrequently, deſpair in both; ſome natures ſeem ſtupidly inſenſible, others vainly ſtout, or perhaps obſtinately ſtubborn; all theſe however different in other reſpects, are equally calculated to ſuffer pain, perhaps too, without viſible emotions, and it is to one or other of theſe cauſes, that we owe the accounts we have, and which we are apt too implicitly to applaud, of antient heroiſm, which in fact however, produced almoſt as admired characters, upon falſe principles of virtue, as have ſince appeared upon true.

The true principle then of patience, or fortitude properly ſo called, is faith, a firm perſuaſion of the being and providence of God, and a ſteady reliance upon the aſſurances he has vouchſafed us, of a future ſtate, in which, ſhall finally be adjuſted all the ſeeming inequalities of the preſent; in which, all tears ſhall be wiped away from the good man's eyes, and death and ſorrow ſhall be no more; where at length, he ſhall diſcern the truth of the pſalmiſt's concluſion, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted," and ſhall ſee more perfectly into the infinite wiſdom of providence, and ſurvey the intricate connections of things temporal and eternal; where he ſhall at length, have a ſenſible conviction, that on which ſide ſoever the balance in this life inclined, yet that pleaſure and pain, ſucceſs and diſappointments, enjoyment and mortification, work all together, for good to them that believe.

Without ſome ſuch refuge to extract any degrees of pleaſure from the extremes of pain, to refine ſome happineſs out of much miſery, is above the reach of ordinary philoſophy, but when the belief of a God, and another life ſtep in to our relief, animate our hopes, and diſpel our fears, then it is, that patience hath her perfect work; that we can even glory in tribulation; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope.

Superior

Superior to all the impreſſions of ſpleen or deſpondency, we then begin to philoſophiſe upon afflictions; to reconcile them to ſome good end or other, in the undiſcerned ſcheme of providence; to conſider them as operating upon the whole, to the encreaſe of our happineſs, and the advancement of God's glory, in the government of the world. Under ſuch impreſſions, the greateſt adverſities, that can befall the patient man, will not diſcompoſe him; he knows, that nothing befalls him by fate or blind chance, that affliction cometh not forth of the duſt, nor doth trouble ſpring out of the ground, but that all proceedeth of the Lord.

He is convinced, that all events, how croſs ſoever to his own purpoſes, may be yet very conſiſtent with the juſtice, wiſdom, and goodneſs of God, and upon the whole, may conduce to his own good; the language of ſuch a man, under the greateſt ſhock, is that of good old Eli, "it is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth good unto him;" the loſs of friends, or of children, trials of human patience, in the moſt tender and delicate inſtances, he receives with ſome ſuch diſpaſſionate reflection, as that of the good old patriarch, "if I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved." The foundation of ſuch a conduct, can be none other but faith, a firm aſſurance, that it is neither from greedineſs of revenge, nor wantonneſs of power, that God thus viſits him, but for the trial of his faith; the improvement of his virtue; the rewards of his obedience; or the puniſhment of his ſins.

This accordingly, is the language of chriſtian philoſophy: "Happy is the man, whom the Lord chaſtneth, even as a father the ſon in whom he delighteth;" it is one of the tendereſt expreſſions, of his paternal regard and affection towards us, that he gives us not up to a judicial blindneſs, and permits us not, as in juſtice he might, to follow our own imaginations; but gives us the moſt ſenſible and affecting rebukes, and that too, in the moſt affecting and ſenſible parts, "not willing that all ſhould periſh, but rather have everlaſting life." To this end it is, that he purifies and refines us in the furnace of afflictions, ſeparates from our ſouls, every baſe alloy of worldly attachment and carnal concupiſcence, that the trial of our faith be-

ing much more precious, than of gold that periſheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found to our praiſe and glory, at the appearance of Chriſt Jeſus.

This too hath ever been the ſcheme of his providence in all ages; the prophets of old, who foretold of Chriſt's coming, ſtood the noble experiment, had trials of cruel mockings and ſcourgings, yea moreover of bonds and impriſonments; the apoſtles and diſciples of our Lord, trode the ſame melancholy road, and to go back to ſtill more antient records of ſufferings and afflictions, ye have heard of the patience of Job.

For the hiſtory of his ſufferings, and the great firmneſs of mind, with which he ſupported himſelf under them, we muſt have recourſe, to the firſt and ſecond chapter of the book, which bears his name. The firſt attack we find made, under the expreſs permiſſion of God, upon his fortunes; the Sabeans fell upon his oxen and aſſes, of which it ſeems, he had a very numerous herd, and took them away by violence, and ſlew the ſervants that were working them; in another quarter of his eſtate, the fire of God burnt up all the ſheep, and ſervants attending them; and in a third, the Chaldeans made a deſcent upon his camels and their keepers, and carry them away. Cloſe upon the heels of theſe miſfortunes, comes a terrible one indeed; the news is brought him, that whilſt his ſons and daughters were entertaining themſelves, according to their uſual cuſtom, in their elder brother's houſe, "Behold a great wind from the wilderneſs, ſmote the four corners of the houſe, and it fell upon them," and buried them in the ruins;—till now, he had kept ſilence, but no longer could he ſmother his concern; at this alarm, human nature rouzed itſelf, and he aroſe and rent his mantle, and fell down, and worſhipped, and in the agony of his ſoul made this mournful, but modeſt reflection; "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked ſhall I return again, the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the name of the Lord!"

Stripped in one hour, of all his fortunes, bereaved the next, of all his children, what conſolation might the good man not promiſe himſelf, from the wife of his boſom, the partner of all his

cares?

cares? She not equal to the firſt attack, ſees ſtill greater and greater misfortunes, crowding themſelves upon him; ſurveys his very perſon become a nauſeous ſpectacle, ſmitten with angry broils, from the ſole of his feet, to the crown of his head; reproaches him therefore, with the ſervile piety and goodneſs of his paſt life, and bids him try the bold experiment of a contrary conduct, and as all his piety had thus far, ſtood him in little ſtead, at once curſe God and die.

This but the more alarmed him, as it was adding an indirect kind of ſuicide, to direct blaſphemy;—ſad conſolation! he therefore modeſtly rebukes her profaneneſs, and throws in a noble reflection upon his own misfortunes. "Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women; What! ſhall we receive good at the hands of God, and ſhall we not receive evil?" Here ſtrictly ſpeaking, concluded his poſitive ſufferings, nor indeed could the malice of the devil invent or inflict more, his life was an expreſs reſerve, in the commiſſion God indulged to Satan; ſad reſerve! under ſuch a complication of diſaſters and diſeaſes.

* Stop but here, and there is neither doubt nor difficulty, about the patience of Job, the moral, which every reader comes ſo keenly prepared for; go to the next chapter, and ſee what is become of all that virtue, if it be not, by a tranſition quick as it is aſtoniſhing, transformed into downright perverſeneſs and querulouſneſs, and whatever Job in the narrative was, Job in the ſcene, be not the very picture of impatience and impiety.

Either therefore we muſt ſay, that the fame of Job's patience, took its riſe from ſome records or traditions, of much earlier date, than the book that bears his name, or we muſt have recourſe to other principles, than have yet been advanced, to extract from it any ſuch doctrine; if the book be hiſtory, it ſeems next to impoſſible, to juſtify upon the face of it, all that patience, for which the world has embalmed Job's memory; if it be, as it is moſt probable, and learned men ſuppoſe it is, an allegory and a drama too, ſome advances may be made, towards drawing ſome ſuch moral for it.

Suppoſe then, what, if the compaſs of a ſermon would admit, might eaſily be proved, that the querulouſneſs and impatience of Job in the ſcene, is all an aſſumed or perſonated character, and no part at

all of his real one, that it is aſſumed for a very good reaſon, and carried on for a very pious end; that he is made to ſpeak there, a language the very reverſe of all his ſentiments, and to act a part only for a particular time, and for a particular reaſon; and that from all the querulouſneſs and impatience, he expreſſes in the ſcene, he returns in the concluſion, to all the gravity and ſobriety of character, that he firſt ſet out with, ſome moral like that of patience, might poſſibly be concluded from it.

But ſuppoſe again, what is the truth of the caſe, that from all thoſe expreſſions of blaſphemy and impatience, he be convinced at laſt, of the indecency and impropriety of them; that he comes over at length, upon God's interpoſing in the diſpute between him and his three friends, to the very argument, of humility and patience, that he had been all along denying, and adopts every ſentiment which he had been oppoſing; that he falls in at once, with all thoſe rigid maxims of virtue, and all thoſe divine leſſons of patience, which they had been teaching, and he for argument's ſake, diſputing; you have then all that is neceſſary, all at leaſt that is to be had upon the evidence of this book, to elicit the doctrine he was ſo much famed for. You have more, for you have the teſtimony of God himſelf born to his virtue, you have his patience rewarded, by a double increaſe of all his former fortunes, and his piety acknowledged, by God's bleſſing the latter end of Job, more than his beginning *.

Something farther therefore than the two firſt chapters, we muſt look, before we can pronounce with any certainty, upon the moral character of the dramatic Job; before we can fairly ſay, he was either pious or patient, we muſt firſt attend him throughout the whole of his argument, ſee him fairly through the ſcene, and mark the end of all his trial. And this if I miſtake not, is the very method of proceeding, recommended by St. James in the text, in the attention, we are to pay this character. Behold we account them happy that endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have ſeen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy; here are plainly two very different conſiderations, enter into the regard we are to pay this character, for I

* See Book II. Sect. IV.

take for granted that it is to this ſtory, and not to any traditional Job, that he refers; Job's patience is the one, and God's mercy is the other.

But from what other view of this ſtory than this, can we collect Job's patience? and in what inſtance, did God's mercy in this caſe ſo ſignally interpoſe its-ſelf? not in making trial of his virtue, by expoſing him to the devil's machinations; that were hard indeed, to ſay no more of it, ſuppoſing him to be the pious or the patient man at the bottom, that he is ſaid to have been; what then becomes of all this pitifulneſs and tender mercy, ſo much applauded by the apoſtle? or how in this repreſentation of Job, ſhall we ſee this attribute of God, ſo egregiouſly diſplayed, as he inſinuates? in the end no doubt of Job's trial, and not before; not before he adopts all thoſe ſentiments of patience, which he had been made to oppoſe, and then he became the object of God's mercy; not before he repented himſelf, of all his aſſumed impiety, in duſt and aſhes, and then he became the proper ſubject of God's bleſſing.

Addreſs this reaſoning upon Job's ſtory, as the apoſtle has addreſſed it, to the diſperſed Jews, and you ſee the propriety and energy of it; patience in the diſperſed diſtreſſed condition, they were now in, was the ſingle virtue, he recommended to them, a virtue that in ſuch a ſituation, more particularly concerned them; he refers them therefore for their comfort, to the huſbandman, to learn from him perſeverance; in the next place, to their prophets, to learn from them long-ſuffering; in the laſt, to a celebrated inſtance of fortitude, upon their own records, and in their own canon, and points out to them the moral of his ſtory, as the grand object of their attention.

This was Job's ſtory; and the moral of that plainly was, that if they did but ſubmit themſelves to the afflicting hand of God, a time might come, when he would take it off from them, and that how ſevere and rigid ſoever, they might conceive him to be, in the matter of their preſent diſperſion, yet at the end, in his own due time, they ſhould have a ſenſible conviction, as Job had, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.

Should

Should this idea of Job's patience, as deducible from the ſtory we have of him, be thought either obſcure or refined, there is no helping it; for from this, if from any view of his ſtory, his patitience is to be collected; the extremely aukward and ridiculous figure he is made to cut, in the character he perſonates of impatience; the abſurd inconſiſtent language he vents, the ſtrange arguments he maintains, and the evaſive inſincerity, with which he maintains them, are all of them proofs, that neither the one nor the other of them, belong to the patient, the perfect and the upright Job.

But once ſuppoſe all this impatience on his ſide, calculated with a view to expoſe the vice its-ſelf, and by expoſing it, to recommend the virtue of patience, you are then in poſſeſſion of the whole ſecret, and begin to ſee, that in the art and management of the ſtory, Job is made impatient, for the very end, that the Spartans made their ſlaves drunk, in order to give their children a leſſon of ſobriety; he is made impatient, to furniſh out, not a picture, but a leſſon of patience *.

The reſult then, of all that has been ſaid is briefly this; we Chriſtians neither want reaſons, encouragement, nor authority, any more than the Jews, to recommend the virtue of patience; its uſe is manifold, its practice attainable, and its rewards glorious; conſidered as perſeverance only, it is laudable; but as reſignation, it is pious; and as fortitude, godlike; for Chriſt alſo ſuffered for us, leaving us an example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps.

Be patient therefore brethren! unto the coming of the Lord; refer the event of all things, to this grand period; and be aſſured, that neither diſappointments, misfortunes, nor afflictions ſhall then paſs unrewarded. If therefore bodily pain and infirmity, be your portion in this life, faint not, for though the outward man periſheth, yet the better part, the inward man, under the aſſiſtances of divine grace, ſhall be renewed day by day, and your light afflictions which were but for a moment, in compariſon of eternity, ſhall by that time, have wrought for you a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory. If temporal calamities, the ſpoiling of your

* See Book III. Sect. V.

your goods, the reviling your credit, or the perſecution of your perſons, be the hard lot of ſome among you; ſtabliſh your hearts, have faith in God, for the extricating you in his due time, out of all thoſe difficulties, as well as ſupporting you under them; hear for your comfort, the teſtimony of the ſpirit, to the angel of the church of Philadelphia, " I know thy works, that thou haſt kept the words of patience: I will alſo keep thee from the hour of temptation, which ſhall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."

If death its-ſelf, the greateſt and moſt formidable of all natural evils, be, the final period of our preſent afflictions, even that death ſhall one day be ſwallowed up in victory; its ſting ſhall be taken from it, and the power of the grave defeated, at our reſurrection; as a tribute indeed to nature, it is appointed for all men, once to die, and our lives are at the mercy of a thouſand accidents, as well as ſubject to a thouſand diſeaſes.

The beſt inference from all which, is plainly this, that we ſhould live as men not afraid to die, that whether we live, we ſhould live unto God, or whether we die, we ſhould die unto God, ſo that living or dying we may be his. Thanks therefore be to him, that he hath given us the victory, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, wherefore, as the apoſtle concludes, " Be ye ſteadfaſt, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know, that your labor ſhall not be in vain, in the Lord."

F I N I S.

Lately publiſhed by the ſame AUTHOR,

The New Creation a State of Proſelytiſm. A Sermon preached at his Majeſty's Chappel at *Whitehall*, on *Sunday*, *February* 10, 1740.

A Sermon preached at *St. Mary*'s Church in *Cambridge*, before the Judges, *&c.* at the Aſſizes held *July* 14, 1741.

A Sermon preached, upon the Rebellion, at St. *Mary*'s Church, in *Cambridge*, before the Univerſity, on *Sunday*, *October* 27, 1745. The day of commemoration of Benefactors.

MUSEUM BRITANNICUM